

Buffalo Bill Again!

"The Prairie Rover; or, The Robin Hood of the Border," Next Week!

New York Saturday Evening Post A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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TERMS IN ADVANCE.

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A HAPPY DAY.
BY EBEN E. RExford.

The sky shut down like some blue tent
About our little world that day.
While, like white sails that came and went
Upon the broad, blue, quiet, azure bay,
The white clouds moved with warm winds blow,
So far away all fret and din.
We almost thought that waters blue
Had girls a fairy island in.

The spicylangor of the air
Was like a dream of southern shores;
We drifted idly here and there,
And the bright, fragrant, scented oars.
We touched their banks where violets grew,
And drank their wine-like sweeteness in;
A fairer day I never knew;
I think a fairer one has been.

The water-lilies lifted up
To catch the wine of air and sun,
A dainty and a fragile cup,
As light as a gossamer, every one.
He broke one from its slender stem,
And had me drink the draught of youth
From chalice fairer than a gem.
A happy day it was, in truth.

We watched the robins build their nest,
And heard the skylark's silver song,
And floated slowly to the west,
As we lay on the soft, green grass along.
Past shores where willows lean to dip
The eddying waters, side by side,
And watch the lights and shadows slip
In changeable beauty, down the tide.

We sung together as the sun
Slipped lower down a cloudless west,
Our voices seemed to blend as one,
And the sun set, and we laid rest.
A dimly seen, and yet so sweet.
That often, since that summer day,
Its words my lips and heart repeat;
And so the moments slipped away.

And so we drifted with the day
Into the weeping of the west;
The world was far and far away,
But still we were the guests.
And on, and on, but never back,
Into the sunset's yellow sea,
With moonlight sparkling in our track.
Glad-hearted, silent, drifted we.

Oh, it was such a pleasant dream!
A scene from some enchanted land,
As we went drifting down the stream,
And to the land of fairy-land.
And since that day my heart has been
As glad as any heart can be,
For love, who steered our vessel in.
Has promised he would stay with me.

Erminie:

THE GIPSY QUEEN'S VOW.
BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AN AWFUL MYSTERY," "VICTORIA," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. TOOSYPEGS "TURNS UP" AGAIN.
"His looks de argue him replete with modesty."
—SHAKESPEARE.

"WHY, MR. HARKINS, it ain't possible, now!" exclaimed a struggling, incredulous voice.
"Just to think we should meet again after such a long time! I'm sure it's real surprising."

The speaker, a pale young man, with a whole-some distrust of London pickpockets before his eyes, raised a stout stick he carried, with the evident intention of trying the thickness of the pale young man's skull; but before it could come down, the proprietor of the fleeces began, in a tone of mild expostulation:

"Why, Mr. Harkins, you haven't forgotten me—have you? Don't you recollect the young man you brought to London in your wagon one rainy night? Why, Mr. Harkins, I'm O. C. Toosypegs!" said the pale young man, in a slightly aggrieved tone.

"Why, so hit be!" exclaimed Mr. Harkins, brightening up, and lowering his formidable weapon. "Blessed if you 'adn't gone clean hout my 'ead! Why, Mr. Toosypegs, this is the most surpriseding thing, as ever was! I ha'n't seen you I don't care when!"

"I'm very much obliged to you, Mr. Harkins," said Mr. Toosypegs, gratefully. "I know you'd be very glad to see me, and it's real kind of you to say so. I hope Mrs. Harkins and your infant family are all quite well, I thank you."

"Yes, they're half among the middlin's," said Mr. Harkins, indifferently. "Mrs. Harkins 'as been and gone and 'ad the—what's this now?" said Mr. Harkins, pausing, with knit brows, and scratching his head in perplexity. "Blessed if I ha'n't clean forgot the name, it was 'tongs,' no—yes—it was 'tongs,' hand something else."

"And poker," suggested Mr. Toosypegs, thoughtfully.

"Mr. Toosypegs," said Mr. Harkins, facing round fiercely, "I 'ope you don't mean for to insult a cove, do you?"



"Wife, mother, and widow at eighteen! Maude, Maude how can I realize this?"

"Why, Mr. Harkins!" remonstrated the astonished and aggrieved Mr. Toosypegs. "I'm sure I never meant any such thing; I wouldn't insult you for all the world, for—for—" Mr. Toosypegs paused for a figure of speech strong enough. "For any amount of money, Mr. Harkins," added Mr. Toosypegs, warmly.

"Well, it don't make no matter if you did," said Mr. Harkins, cooling suddenly down.

"But what hit this Mrs. 'Arkins 'ad—tongs-tongs? Oh, yes! tongs-will-eat-us!" that's the name, Mr. Toosypegs. Mrs. 'Arkins 'ad that," said Mr. Harkins, triumphantly.

"Tonsilitis, perhaps," insinuated Mr. Toosypegs, meekly.

"Well, hain't that wot I said?" exclaimed Mr. Harkins, rousing up again. "Hand my John Halbert, he's been and 'ad a Sarah Bell affection—"

"Cerebral," again ventured Mr. Toosypegs, humbly.

"Well, hain't that wot I said?" shouted Mr. Harkins, glaring savagely at the republican who wilted suddenly down. "Blessed if I have a good mind to bring you a clip 'long side the 'ead, for your impence in contradicting me like this ere hev'ry time? Why, you'd perwe a saint, so you would!" exclaimed the outraged Mr. Harkins.

"Mr. Harkins, I'm sure I never meant to offend you, and I'm real sorry for your trouble," apologized Mr. Toosypegs, in a remorse-stricken tone.

"Well, it wasn't no trouble," said Mr. Harkins, testily. "Cos he got took to the 'orse-pit for fear hany the rest of the family would take it. Mary-Hann, she got her feet wet, and took the inn-flue-end-ways; what yer got to say ag'in that?" fiercely demanded Mr. Harkins.

"Humph!" grunted Mr. Harkins; "well hit's no shoneynce, but you don't disremember the hold gipsy-woman we took him, do you?"

"The one with the black eyes and short frock? Oh, I remember her!" said Mr. Toosypegs. "I've never seen her since."

"No, I shouldn't spose you 'ad," said Mr. Harkins, gruffly, "seein' she's as mad as a March 'are, down there with her tribe. Mysterious are the ways of Providence. You blamed little rascal! if you do that again, I'll chuck you inter the Serpentine! blessed if I don't."

His last sentence, which began with a pious upturning of the whites, or rather the yellows, of Mr. Harkins' eyes, was abruptly cut short by a depraved youth, who, turning a course of summertime for the benefit of his constitution, rolled suddenly against Mr. Harkins' shins, and the next instant found himself whispering and rubbing a portion of his person, where Mr. Harkins had planted a well-applied kick.

"The way the principals of perfideness is neglected to be histilled into the minds of youths now-a-days, is distressin' to behold," said Mr. Harkins, with a grimace of pain; "but has I was sayin' about the hold gipsy queen, she's gone crazy, hand"—here Mr. Harkins lowered his voice to a hoarse whisper—"she's went hand got a baby."

"Do tell!" ejaculated Mr. Toosypegs, who saw it was expected of him to be surprised, and who consequently was, though he could not see any earthly reason for it.

Mr. Harkins meant the croup, thought it a very likely effect to be brought about by either.

"Then Sary Jane took the brown skeeters, hand I 'ad the lum-beggar hin my house back, but on the whole, we were all pretty well, thankky!"

"I am real glad to hear it," said Mr. Toosypegs, with friendly warmth. "I've been pretty well myself since, too. I'm very much obliged to you."

"Let's see, it's near a month, hain't it, since the night I took you to London?" said Mr. Harkins.

"Three weeks and five days exactly," said Mr. Toosypegs, briskly.

"I suppose you don't disremember the hold gipsy has we took him that night—do you? I was a stranger hand you took me hin." That's the Bible, Mr. Toosypegs," said Mr. Harkins, drawing down the corners of his mouth, and looking pious, and giving Mr. Toosypegs a dig in the ribs, to mark the beauty of the quotation.

"Yes, Mr. Harkins, but not so hard, if you want—it hurts," said Mr. Toosypegs, with tears in his eyes, as he rubbed the place.

"What does that there piece bout the Bible?" said Mr. Harkins, with one of his sudden bursts of fierceness.

"Oh, Lor, no!" said the deeply-scandalized Mr. Toosypegs, surprised into profanity by the enormity of the charge. "It's your elbow, Mr. Harkins it hurts," said Mr. Toosypegs, with a subdued snuffle.

"Humph!" grunted Mr. Harkins; "well hit's no shoneynce, but you don't disremember the hold gipsy-woman we took him, do you?"

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"A baby," went on Mr. Harkins, who would have emphasized his words by another dig in the ribs, but that Mr. Toosypegs dodged back in alarm; "a real baby, alive and kickin'!"

"Pshaw! it ain't possible!" said Mr. Toosypegs, in voice betraying not the slightest particle of emotion.

"It is—hindered as it may sound, it's true," said Mr. Harkins, solemnly. "The way I found hit hout was this: I was comin' halong 'ome, one night hafter bringing half a cove wat got waylaid to Lunnon, a-singin' to myself that there song, the 'Roast Beef of Hold Hindland,' hand a-tinkin' m're arm, Mr. Toosypegs, nor a lot of young pigs goin' to market," said Mr. Harkins, giving his stick a grand flourish to mark this bold figure of speech. "It wasn't a dark night, Mr. Toosypegs, nor yet a light one; the stars was a-shinin' like hevverthing, when, hal huf a sudint, a 'and was laid hin the haft, hand a voice, so deep and orful-like hit made me fairly jump, said:

"A baby," went on Mr. Harkins, who would have emphasized his words by another dig in the ribs, but that Mr. Toosypegs dodged back in alarm; "a real baby, alive and kickin'!"

"I don't put no faith hin the papers myself,"

said Mr. Harkins, in a severe tone: "they hain't to be believed, none of 'em. If they says one ting, you may be sare hit's just exactly the other. That there's no opinion."

"But, Mr. Harkins, look here," said Mr. Toosypegs, deeply impressed with this profound view of the newspaper press in general, "I dare say that's true enough, and it's real sensible of you to say so; but in this case it must be true. Why, they're going to hang the man, Mr. Harkins, and he confessed he did that, along with ever so many other unlawful things. I wonder if hanging hurts much, Mr. Harkins," said Mr. Toosypegs, involuntarily loosening his neck-cloth, as he thought of it.

"Well, I don't know," returned Mr. Harkins, thoughtfully, "I never was anged myself, but I had a cousin who married a viddler."

Here, Mr. Harkins, taking advantage of a moment's unguarded proximity, gave Mr. Toosypegs a facious dig in the ribs, which caused that ill-used young gentleman to spring back with something like a howl.

"You don't know how sharp your elbow is, Mr. Harkins; and my ribs are real thin. I ain't used to such treatment, and it hurts," said Mr. Toosypegs, with whom this seemed to be the climax of wrong, and beyond which there was no proceeding further.

"I have heard it was honly their shins as was tender hin Hamerica," said Mr. Harkins. "When are you goin' back to Hamerica, Mr. Toosypegs?"

"Not before a year—perhaps two," said Mr. Toosypegs, brightening suddenly up. "And I tell you what, Mr. Harkins, America is a real nice place, and I'll be ever so glad to get back to it. There was the nicest people round where we lived that ever was," went on Mr. Toosypegs, getting enthusiastic. "There was Judge Lawless, up at Heath Hill; and old Admiral Havenful, at the White Squall, and lots of other folks. Where I lived was called Dismal Hollow, owing to its being encircled by huge black rocks on all sides, and a dark pine forest on the other."

"Pleasant place it must 'ave been," said Mr. Harkins, with a strong sneer.

"Well, it wasn't so pleasant as you might thik," seriously replied Mr. Toosypegs, on whom his companion's sarcasm was completely thrown away; "the sun never shone there; and as Dismal Creek, that run right before the house, got swelled up every time it rained, the house always made a point of getting flooded, and so we lived most of the time in the attic in the spring. There were runaway-niggers in the woods, too, who used to steal and do a good many other nasty things, so it wasn't so good to go out at night, but, on the whole, it was pretty pleasant."

"Poot ever made you leave sich a nice place?" said Mr. Harkins, with a little suppressed chuckle.

"Why, Mr. Harkins, I may tell you as a friend, for I know you won't mention it again," said Mr. Toosypegs, lowering his voice to a deeply-confidential and strictly private cadence. "My pa died when I was a little shaver about so-year-old, and ma and I were pretty poor, so to be candid about it. Well, then, three years ago my pa died, too, which was a serious affliction to me, Mr. Harkins, and I was left plunged in deepest sorrow and poverty. The niggers worked the farm, and I was employing my time in cultivating a pair of whiskers to alleviate my grief when I received a letter from an uncle here in England, telling me to come right on, and, if he liked me, he'd make me his heir when he died, which was real kind of him. That's what brought me here, Mr. Harkins; and I'm stopping with my uncle and his sister, who is an unmarried woman of forty-five, or so."

"Hand the hold chap's 'live yet?'" inquired Mr. Harkins.

"Mr. Harkins, my uncle, I am happy to say, still exists," answered Mr. Toosy pegs, gravely.

"Humph! 'As he got much pewter, Mr. Toosy pegs?'

"Much what?" said the mild owner of the freak, completely at a loss. "You'll excuse me, I hope, Mr. Harkins, but I really don't understand."

"Green," muttered Mr. Harkins, contemptuously to himself. Then aloud: "How much do you think he'll leave you?"

"Well, about two thousand pounds or so," said Mr. Toosy pegs, complacently.

"Two—thousand—pound!" slowly articulated the astounded Mr. Harkins. "Oh, my heaven!—why, you'll be rich, Mr. Toosy pegs! What will you do with all that there money?"

"Why, my aunt, Miss Priscilla Dorothea Toosy pegs, and I are going home to Maryland (that's where I used to live, Mr. Harkins), and we're going to fit up the old place and live there. Aunt Priscilla never was in America, and wants to see it real bad."

"Two—thousand—pound," still more slowly repeated Mr. Harkins. "Well, things is 'stonishing. Jest think of me now, the honest and 'ard-working father of ten children, hand you won't catch nobody going hand dying hand leaving me one single blessed brass far den, while here's a cov'e more'n a'f a hass. I say, Mr. Toosy pegs, you wouldn't lend me a guinea or two, would you?" insinuated Mr. Harkins in his most incredulous voice.

"Why, certainly, Mr. Harkins," said Mr. Toosy pegs, briskly, drawing out his purse. "I'm real happy to be able to be of service to you. Here's two guineas, and don't put yourself out about paying it."

"Mr. Toosy pegs, you're a brick!" said Mr. Harkins, grasping his hand with emotion. "I won't put myself out in the least, since you're kind enough to request it; but hit you'll come and dine with me some day, I'll give you a dinner of b'iled pertenders and roast hams fit for a king. Will you come?" urged Mr. Harkins, giving him a friendly poke with his forefinger.

"Certainly I will, Mr. Harkins; and it's real kind in you to ask me," said Mr. Toosy pegs, politely. "I see you're in a hurry, so I'll bid you good-day, now. Most certainly I'll come, Mr. Harkins. I'm very much obliged to you."

CHAPTER IX.

THE SECRET REVEALED.

"I was so young—I loved him so—I had No mother—God forgive me!—and I fell!" —BROWNING.

And how fell the news of Reginald Germaine's innocence of the crime for which he was condemned, and his sad end, on the other persons connected with our tale?

To his mother came the news in her far-off greenwood home; and as she heard he had perished forever in the stormy sea, Reason, already tottering in her half-crazed brain, entirely gave way, and she fled, a shrieking maniac, through the dim, old woods.

To Earl De Courcy it came, bringing deepest regret for the bold-eyed, high-hearted youth, so unjustly condemned, so wrongly accused. He thought of him as he knew him first—pride, princely, handsome, and generous. And now! that young life, under the unjust sentence of the law, had passed away; that haughty head, noble even in its degradation, lay far under the deep sea, among the bleaching bones of those grim-hardened men.

To one, in her father's castle halls, it came, bringing a feeling of untold relief. He had cruelly wronged her; but he was dead now, and she freely forgave him for all she had suffered. While he lived, incurable sorrow must be hers; but he was gone, and happy days might dawn for her yet. She might love another now, without fearing it a crime to do so—one noble and generous, and worthy of her in every way. One deep breath of relief, one low sigh to the memory of his sad fate, and then a look of calm, deep happiness stole over the beautiful face, such as it had not worn for years, and the beautiful head, with its wealth of raven ringlets, dropped on her arm, in a voiceless thanksgiving, in a joy too intense for words.

And this was Lady Maude Percy. In spite of her steady refusal of his suit, Lord Villiers had not despaired. He could not understand the cause of her strange melancholy and persistent refusal of her hand, knowing, as he did, that she loved him, but, believing the obstacle to be merely an imaginary one, he hoped on, and waited for the time to come when this singular fancy of hers would be gone.

That time had come now. Calling, one morning, and finding her in the drawing-room, he was greeted with a brilliant smile, with a quick flush of pleasure, and a manner so different from her customary one, that his heart bounded with sudden hope.

"I am truly rejoiced to see Lady Maude recovering her spirits again," he said, his fine eyes lit up with pleasure. "She has been shadowed by the dark cloud of her nameless melancholy long enough."

"If Lord Villiers only knew how much cause I had for that nameless melancholy, he would forgive me any pain it may ever have caused him," she said, while a shadow of the past fell darkly over her bright young face.

"And may I not know? Dearest Maude, when is this mystery to end? Am I never to be made happy by the possession of this dear hand?"

He took the little, white hand, small and snowy as a lily-leaf, and it was no longer withdrawn, but nestled lovingly in his, as if there it found its rightful home.

"Maude, Maude!" he cried, in a delirium of joy, "is your dark dream, then, in reality over? Oh, Maude, speak, and tell me! Am I to be made happy yet?"

"If you can take me as I am, if you can forgive and forget the past, I am yours, Ernest!" she said, in a thrilling whisper.

In a moment she was in his arms, held to the true heart whose every throb was for her—her head upon the breast that was to pillow hers through life.

"Maude, Maude! My bride, my life, my peerless darling! Oh, Maude, this is too much happiness!" he cried, in a sort of transport between the passionate kisses pressed on her warm, yielding lips.

Blushingly she rose from his embrace, and gently extricated herself from his arms.

"Oh, Maude, my beautiful darling! May Heaven forever bless you for this!" he fervently exclaimed, all aglow with passionate love.

She had sunk into a seat, and bent her head into her hand, not daring to meet the full, fal con gaze, flashing with deepest tenderness, that she knew was bent upon her.

"Speak again, Maude! Once more let me hear those precious words from your own sweet lips, Maude! Maude, sweetest and fairest, speak!"

He wreathed his arms around her, while he seemed breathing out his very soul as he aspired her name.

"But you have not heard all, my lord. This secret—do you not wish to hear it?" she faintly said, without lifting her dark, beautiful eyes.

"Not unless it is your wish to tell it. I want to hear nothing but that you are my own."

"Yet, when you hear it, my lord, you may retract the hand I have offered."

"Never, never! Nothing under heaven could make me do that!"

"You speak rashly, Lord Ernest. Wait until you have heard all. I dare not accept the noble heart and hand you offer, without revealing the one great error of my youth."

"You commit error, my beautiful saint! You who are as perfect as an angel in body, Oh, Maude, I cannot believe it."

"It is true, nevertheless, my lord. But oh, how shall I tell you? How can I confess what I have been—what I am?"

There was a sharp agony in her voice, and her head dropped on her hands, and her fair bosom rose and fell like a tempest-tossed sea.

Encircling her with his arm, he drew her down until her white face lay hidden in his breast, and then pressing his lips to the dark ripples of hair sweeping against his cheek, he murmured, in tenderest whisper:

"Tell me now, Maude, and fear not; for nothing you can say will convince me you are not as pure and unimpassioned as the angels themselves. What is this terrible secret, sweetest love?"

"Oh, my dear lord, every word you speak, every caress you give me, makes my revelation the harder!" she passionately cried. "And yet it must be made, even though you should spurn me from you in loathing after. Listen, my lord. You think me Lady Maude Percy?"

"Yes, dear love."

"That is not my name!"

"What, Maude?"

"That is not my name. No; I am not mad, Lord Villiers, though you look as if you thought so. I have been mad once! You and all the world are deceived. I am not what I seem."

"What, in Heaven's name, do you mean? What, then, are you?"

"I was a wife! I have been a mother! I am a widow!"

"Maude!"

"You recoil from me in horror! I knew it would be so. I deserve it—I deserve it! but oh, Lord Villiers, it will kill me!" she cried passionately wringing her hands.

"Maude, are you mad?"

"I am not—oh, I am not! if a grief-crazed brain, a blighted life, a broken heart be not madness!"

"But, Maude! Good heavens! You are so young—not yet eighteen! Oh, it cannot be true!" he cried, incoherently.

"Would to God it were not! Yet four years ago I was a wedded wife!"

"Wife, mother, and widow at eighteen! Maude, how can I realize this?"

"Oh, I was crazed! I was mad! and I did love him so, then! Not as I love you, Lord Ernest, with a woman's strong, undying affection, but with the wild, passionate fervor of youth. I must have inherited my dead mother's Spanish blood; for no calm-pulsed English girl ever felt love like that."

"Oh, Lady Maude!—Lady Maude! I could hardly have believed a messenger from heaven had told me this."

"God be merciful to human error! A long life of sorrow and remorse must atone for that first rash fault."

He was pacing up and down the long room with rapid, excited strides; his fine face flushed, and his hands tightly shut, as if to keep down the bitterness that rebelliously rose at this unlooked-for avowal. He had expected to hear some light, trivial fault, magnified by a morbid imagination; but not a clandes tine marriage. No man likes to hear that the woman he loves has ever loved another; and Lady Maude Percy had already seemed so angelic that this sudden "falling off" of his high ideal, brought with it a pang like the bitterness of death.

And therefore, pacing up and down—up and down, with brain and heart in a tumult!—Lord Ernest Villiers' pride for one moment overcame and mastered his love. For one brief moment only—for then his eyes fell on the drooping figure, and despair-bowed young head; and the anguished attitude went to his heart, bringing back a full tide of pity, love, and forgiveness. All was forgotten, but that she was the only one he ever did or could love; and lifting the sorrowing head and grief-bowed form in his arms, once more he clasped her closer to the many young heart she could feel throbbing under her own, and whispered:

"Oh, Lord Ernest! you were my first thought. I felt I could dare to love you now as you deserved to be loved, without sinning. I determined to tell you all, and to love you still, even though you spurned me from you forever. Oh, Ernest! my noble-hearted! may God forever bless you for forgiving me as I have done, and loving me still!"

Her voice ceased, but the dark, eloquent eyes were full of untold love—of love that could never die for all time.

"My own!—my own! never so well beloved as now! My Maude!—my Maude!—my wife! blot out from the leaves of your life that dark page—that year of passion, of error, of sorrow and shame. We will never speak or think of it more, sweet Maude. Germaine has gone to answer for what he has done; if he has sinned while living, so also he has deeply suffered and sorrow-atomized for all. Fiery, passionate and impulsive, if he has wronged others, so also has he been deeply wronged. May God forgive him!"

"Amen," was the solemn response.

"And now, Maude, what need of further delay? When shall this dear hand be mine?"

"Whenever you claim it, dear Ernest. I shall have no will but yours now," she answered, with all a woman's devotion in her deep eyes. "I am yours—yours through life, and beyond death, if I may."

"Tell me, Maude, who was the husband of your childhood?"

From the pale, quivering lip, in a dying whisper, dropped the words: "Reginald Ger maine, the gipsy!"

There was a moment's deathlike silence. The handsome face of Lord Ernest Villiers seemed turned to marble, and still motionless as if inspiring, she lay in the arms that clasped her still in a close embrace. At last:

"Heaven be merciful to the dead! Look up, my precious Maude; for nothing on earth shall ever come between us more!"

Calm and clear, on the troubled wave of her tempest-tossed soul, the low words fell; but

only her deep, convulsive sobs were his answer.

"Maude!—my own dear Maude!" he cried, at last, alarmed by her passion of grief, "cease this wild weeping. Forget the troubled past, dear love; for there are many happy days in store for us all."

But still she wept on—wildly, vehemently, at first—until her strong passion of grief had passed away. He let her sob on in quiet now, with no attempt to check her grief, except by his silent caresses.

She lifted her head and looked up, at last, thanking him by a radiant look, and the soft, thrilling clasp of her white arms.

"I will not ask you to explain now, sweet Maude," he softly whispered. "Some other time, when you are more composed, you shall tell me all."

"No;—better now—far better now; and then while life lasts, neither you nor I, Ernest, will ever breathe one word of the dark, sorrowful story again. Oh, Ernest! can all the fondest love of a lifetime suffice to repay you for the forgiveness you have shown me today?"

"I am more than repaid now, dear love. Speak of that no more. But now that the worst is over, will my Maude tell me all?"

"I have not much to tell, Ernest; but you shall hear it. Nearly three years before you and I met, when a child of fourteen, I was on a visit to my uncle Everly's. My cousin Hubert, home from college, brought with him a fellow-student to spend the vacation, who was presented to me as Count Germaine. What Reginald Germaine was then, you who have seen him, do not need to know. Handsome, dashing, fascinating, he took every heart by storm, winning love by his gay, careless generosity, and respect by his talents and well-known daring. I was a dreamy, romantic school girl; and in this bold, reckless boy, handsome as an angel, I saw the living embodiment of my most glorious ideal. From morning till night we were together; and Ernest, can you understand that wild dream? How I loved him then, words are weak to express, how I loathed and despised him after no words can ever tell. Ernest, he persuaded me to elope with him one night; and we were married. I never stopped to think of the consequences then. I only knew I would have given up my hopes of heaven for him! Three weeks longer he remained at Everly Hall; and then poor sent me back to school, and he went to London."

"No one was in our secret, and we met frequently, unsuspecting; though papa, thinking he was too presuming, had forbidden me to associate with him. One day we went out driving; the carriage was upset; I fainted; and for a long time I remembered nothing more."

"When reason returned, I was in a little cage, nursed by an old woman; while he hovered by my bedside night and day. Then I learned that I had given birth to a child—dead now and buried. I could recollect myself as of hearing for a time the feeble cries of an infant, and seeing a baby face, with the large, black, beautiful eyes of Reginald Germaine. I turned my face to the wall and wept, at first, in childish grief; but he caressed and soothed me, and I soon grew calm. I thought, at the time, a strange, unaccountable change had come over him; though I could not tell what. When I was well again I learned. Standing before me, one morning, he calmly and quietly told me how he had deceived me—that, instead of being a French count, he was the son of a strolling gipsy; but that, having repented of what he had done, he was willing to give me up.

"The very life seemed stricken out of my heart as I listened. Then my pride—the aroused pride of my race—arose; and, oh! words are weak to tell how I loathed myself and him. That I, a Percy—the daughter of a race that had mated with royalty hitherto fallen so low as to wed a gipsy! I shrunk, in horror unspeakable, from the black, bottomless quagmire into which I had sunk. All my love in that instant turned to bitterest scorn, and I passionately hated him leave me, and never dare to come near me again, or breathe a word of the past. He obeyed; and from that day I never beheld him more."

"After that, I met you, Lord Ernest, and I loved you as I never loved him. For him, I cherished a blind, mad passion; for you, I felt the strong, earnest love of womanhood. You loved me; but I shrank from the affection my very soul was crying out for, knowing I dared not love you without guilt. Now you know the secret of my coldness and mysterious melancholy.

"I heard often of Germaine; and his name was like a spear-thrust to my heart. When I was told of his arrest, trial and condemnation for grand larceny, you perhaps may imagine, I can never tell, exactly what I felt. His name was the theme of every tongue; and day after day I was forced to listen to the agonizing details, knowing—how as he had fallen, guilty as he might be—he was my husband still. Thank God! through all his ignominy, he had honor enough never to reveal our dark secret. Then came the news of his death; and Heaven forgive me if my heart bounded as I heard it!

"Oh, Lord Ernest! you were my first thought. I felt I could dare to love you now as you deserved to be loved, without sinning. I determined to tell you all, and to love you still, even though you spurned me from you forever. Oh, Ernest! my noble-hearted! may God forever bless you for forgiving me as I have done, and loving me still!"

Her voice ceased, but the dark, eloquent eyes were full of untold love—of love that could never die for all time.

"My own!—my own! never so well beloved as now! My Maude!—my Maude!—my wife! blot out from the leaves of your life that dark page—that year of passion, of error, of sorrow and shame. We will never speak or think of it more, sweet Maude. Germaine has gone to answer for what he has done; if he has sinned while living, so also he has deeply suffered and sorrow-atomized for all. Fiery, passionate and impulsive, if he has wronged others, so also has he been deeply wronged. May God forgive him!"

"Amen," was the solemn response.

"And now, Maude, what need of further delay? When shall this dear hand be mine?"

"Whenever you claim it, dear Ernest. I shall have no will

self, (more's the pity!), but will leave it to the imagination of my readers.

The last "I will" had been uttered; and amid that breathless silence Ernest Seyton, Viscount Villiers, and Maude Percy were pronounced man and wife.

There was an instant's pause, and the guests were about to press forward to offer their congratulations, when pealing through the silence came an unseen voice, in clear, bell-like tones that thrilled through every heart, with the words:

"An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a life for a life! My curse, and the curse of Heaven rest on all of the house of De Courcy!"

Blanched with wonder, horror and consternation, every face was turned in the direction whence the voice came; but nothing was to be seen. So sudden, so unlooked for was this awful interruption, so terrific was that deep, hollow voice, that the shrieks they would have uttered were frozen to the lips of the terrified women. And while they still stood speechless, horro-struck, gazing in silence, the deep, dirge-like voices pealed again through the silent apartment, the knell of doom.

"As the rich man who stole the one ewe-lamb was accused, so also be all who bear the name of De Courcy! May their bridal-robés turn to funeral-palls! may their hours of rejoicing end in blackest misery! Blighted be their lives! doomed be all they love—hated by earth, and accursed by Heaven!"

The voice ceased. A wild shriek resounded through the room and the bride fell fainting on the ground.

In an instant all was confusion. Ladies shrieked and screamed; servants came rushing in; gentlemen, pale and horror-struck, hurried hither and thither in wildest confusion. All was uproar and dismay. Lord Villiers, with his senseless bride in his arms, was struggling to force his way from the room; and then high above the din resounded the clear, commanding voice of Earl De Courcy:

"Let all be quiet! There is no danger! Secure the doors, and look for the intruder. This is the trick of some evil-minded person to create a sensation."

His words broke the spell of superstitious terror that bound them. Every one flew to obey—guests, servants and all. Each room was searched—every corner and crevice was examined. If a pin had been lost, it must have been found; but they searched in vain. The owner of the mysterious voice could not be discovered.

Looking in each other's faces, white with wonder, they gave up the fruitless search, and returned to the saloon.

Like a flock of frightened birds, the ladies, pale with mortal apprehension, were huddled together—not daring even to speak. In brief, awe-struck whispers the result was told; and then, chill with apprehension, the guests began rapidly to disperse. And in less than an hour the stately house of Maude Percy was wrapt in silence, solitude and gloom. The bride, surrounded by her attendants, lay still unconscious, while all over London the news was spreading of the appalling termination of the wedding.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 290.)

Idaho Tom,

THE YOUNG OUTLAW OF SILVERLAND!

BY OLL COOMES.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DEATH CANOE.

NIGHT hung like a shadow over the land. Hill, valley, mountain and forest had all been blended in one dissolving view. The moon sailed asky, attended by her starry retinues. Her full, soft face was reflected in the still waters of Tahoe. The belt of yellow sand that girded the shores of Silver Bay looked like a golden border, and contrasted beautifully with the silvery bay and the dark-green forest of muttering pines.

On the south side of the bay, in among the rocks that were overshadowed by mighty trees, a dull light was reflected from the lower foliage of the trees. Evidently a camp-fire burned beneath the spreading branches of those forest monarchs and published abroad its location.

A pair of restless, searching eyes detected it, and with the silence of a shadow moved away in that direction.

The light, true enough, was the reflection of a camp-fire within whose radius sat and reclined our friends, the Boy Hunters. It was the first night following Billy Brady's adventure with the Indian, Tall Pine.

Wild Dick, Billy and Perry were under a sheltering rock where no enemy's bullet could reach them, unless the enemy first made himself master of the position already occupied by their faithful guard, Bold Heart.

Billy's tongue was rattling away as usual, though the absence of Frank Caselton seemed to banish all hilarity from the breasts of his auditors.

Frank, his fate, and the inhabitants of the floating island, were the sole topics of conversation.

Guarded by the vigilant Indian youth, the trio under the ledge felt perfectly at ease, and so the minutes slipped rapidly by, almost unnoticed.

Suddenly a far-off groan came to their ears through the lonesome night.

Bold Heart came bounding down from his look-out into camp in no little excitement.

"What's up, Bold Heart?" asked Dick.

"Somebody in trouble on the bay—nearly Frank," replied the Indian.

In an instant every boy was upon foot, rifle in hand, ready to march.

Bold Heart led the way, and, pressing along through the dense pine woods, they all descended to the shores of the bay.

Pausing just within the shadows at the edge of the sandy beach, they listened—they heard a sound like that which one in distress would make. It emanated from further around the bay, toward the north.

Keeping within the shadows, the boys skirted along the western shore of the bay, and soon came in sight of a skiff, with a single occupant, standing motionless upon the shimmering waters.

The occupant of the little craft was a savage. This the boys could easily see in the bright glow of the moon. He had hold of both oars, and seemed struggling in all the agonies of death, either to use the oars or release them, it being impossible to tell which.

"There! there, boys!" exclaimed Wild Dick, "there's the canoe of which I was tellin' you fellers. I tell you there's somethin' awful about it! It's death almost to touch it. Some invisible power is there. I seen a savage drop dead in it one day. It's always around this bay—always."

"It's a mystery to me," confessed Perry. "See how the savage writhes! He must be suffering the agonies of death itself."

"Death Canoe!" whispered Bold Heart, in superstitious terror.

"The fools that attempt to steal that gay, deceptive little craft are seized with spasms the moment they touch the oars," averred Dick. "This I have observed on more than one occasion. It's a devilish contrivance of them islanders—an infernal machine to—But look!"

A second savage glided from the shadows, ran across the open beach, and plunging into the bay, swam to his friend's assistance. Arriving at the side of the canoe, he reached up, and seizing his friend by the arm, dragged him from the boat after a mighty effort had almost failed.

After dragging him ashore, it was several moments before the warrior could stand, so terrible had been his tortures in the mysterious canoe. As soon as he was able to walk, his friend led him away into the woods, unmolested by the astonished Boy Hunters.

The crack of a rifle rung suddenly across the bay. It seemed to emanate from the opposite side of the floating island which lay dark and silent upon the bosom of the water.

"Well, Satan is to pay to-night, surely," declared Dick, in an undertone.

"And his Satanic majesty has snt a pack av rhad-skins out to collect the money," was Billy's decision.

"Jews and Gentiles!" burst suddenly from Dick's lips, as he saw a broad sheet of flame leap like lightning from the mysterious island.

It was followed by a sharp, thunderous boom, which seemed the signal for a thousand deafening echoes to lend their vibrant powers in an attempt to shake the old mountain to its Jove.

"Judas!" exclaimed Billy, "and if that wasn't a caron, I never heard one in my life."

"It was a cannon, without a doubt—a small howitzer," protested Perry, seriously; "and now it is doubtful, even if we had a canoe, whether we would dare approach that floating island or not, to inquire after Frank."

"Perhaps we can signal some of the folks on the island ashore to-morrow, and ascertain Frank's situation; so we might jist as well mosey back to camp, for all the good standing here will do."

And so they turned and started back to camp, filled with no little wonder and curiosity by what they had seen and heard.

As they approached camp, Bold Heart suddenly came to a halt, and signified for his companions to do likewise. He had seen the light of the camp-fire flare suddenly up, stronger and brighter, and naturally came to the conclusion that some unknown party had taken possession of, and was replenishing, the fire of their bivouac.

Bold Heart crept forward to reconnoiter. He soon returned, and commanding the boys to follow him, advanced cautiously toward the camp. They soon gained a point where they could command a view of the fire, and to their surprise discovered the figure of a white man, dressed in the garb of a borderman, reclining within its ruddy glow.

Wild Dick scanned the figure as closely as circumstances would permit. There was something about the man's rough, bearded face, and in fact his very attitude of repose, that instinctively told the Boy Hunter the stranger was not to be feared; and so he straightway led the advance into camp.

The old borderman rose to his feet as they approached, peered quickly around him into the darkness, and uttered a low, prolonged whistle significant of surprise, when his eyes fell upon the forms of our young friends advancing from out the shadows.

"Why, boys!" burst from the man's lips, in affected astonishment, "where in the plagued old scrub did you come from?"

"See here now, govein'," replied Billy, pushing his cap back from his brow, and shaking his finger at the stranger in a menacing manner, "this's purty thin for a mon a yer standin'."

"Why, boys, I stand only six feet in my moccasins," replied the old hunter; "but wharfors do you consider that purty thin?"

"Yer jumpin' our claim, This, begob's our camp-fire," retorted Billy.

"Wal, now, boy, who said it wasn't? I've no 'jections to your claim. I'm ole Zedekiah Dee, the Mad Trapper, and I'm at home any place, or else I'm not at home, just as suits the case. Step right in, boys, and settle yourselves down to a good night's sleep."

Delighted at the honest, hearty manner of the renowned trapper's speech, all the boys advanced and shook hands with him except Bold Heart, who, seeing the camp was not guarded, at once resumed his watch on the eminence overlooking the camp.

The Mad Trapper assumed his position of ease by the fire, and the Boy Hunters sat down around him.

"What caused you young gents to obtrude from your camp?" the trapper asked.

"We went to inquire into a noise we heard along the bay," replied Perry Bassett.

"And did you git your boy's curiosity satisfied?"

"Yes, as to the noise we heard; but we finally got worked up all the more, and left the bay completely puzzled."

"You don't proclaim! Thought all was quiet as a Quaker meetin'," returned Zedekiah Dee, with a bland smile and affected surprise.

"Wal, now, boy, who said it wasn't? I've no 'jections to your claim. I'm ole Zedekiah Dee, the Mad Trapper, and I'm at home any place, or else I'm not at home, just as suits the case. Step right in, boys, and settle yourselves down to a good night's sleep."

"Well, yes, come to think," said Dee, scratching his head reflectively, "I did hear that little noise, but s'posed it was just a sound like that which one in distress would make. But be you fellers hunters?"

"We are," replied Dick, "but met with a serious loss to-day—a loss that seldom befalls hunters."

"Do tell!" exclaimed the trapper, agast.

"Yes; we lost one of our companions, but—"

"Holy Je-rusalem! too bad! too bad!" sighed the trapper. "Whar did it happen when? how! all about it!"

Perry narrated the story of Dick and Frank's adventure on the lake, and the accident that subsequently befell the latter, concluding with the remarks:

"I am afraid he will get into bad hands on that island. There are some queer, mysterious things going on around this bay. The place is full of traps and infernal machines. But, whether the girl that rescued Frank and took him to the island, will have the power and will to rescue her act of mercy, is more than I can say."

"She—that's the gal—is a cherribim, boys—a cherribim if ever one descended from on high," said the old trapper, starting to a sit-

ting posture. "I've see'd her, time and ag'in. She's the essence of all that's sweet, lovely, pure, gentle, kind, noble and angelic in female woman. Yes, boys, she's a cherribim on earth. That's not a spark of manhood in one of you, if you wouldn't lay right down and die fer that girl. Je-rusalem! if I wa'st so old and infernal ugly, and known what to say, and how to say it, I'd make love to her quicker'n you could say hoss-fly. I'm solid on that, boys."

"I am glad to hear that she is such a person," declared Perry; "for if Frank is still on the island alive, she will not let him suffer, for he is a noble-hearted youth himself."

"Boys, it's doubtful if you ever see your friend again," said the trapper, in a solemn tone, glancing at each face to see the effect of his words.

"Is our friend dead?—do you know anything about him?" demanded Perry, excitedly.

"No; but I guess he's not hurt bad; but then he'll fall in love with that little cherribim on the island, and will jist up and die for her," replied the trapper, giving utterance to a good-natured chuckle, to see the change that came over the boys' faces.

"You are inclined to get romantic over that, boys."

"Crazy, ar'n't ye, govein'?" added Billy.

"Crazy!—yes, more'n crazy—totally discombobulated, and all for the want of a bit of sport. I'm an ole fool about fun and Ingang-fightin'."

"I reckon year care more 'bout the fun than the fighting, eh?" returned Billy.

"Wal, now, Irishman, you're beginnin' to talk my fightin' abilities; but if you want any Ingang-but'st' done, bring on yer timber, I'll show you I'm a small earthquake—a reg'lar torpedo of destruction."

"All right, Misther Torpedo; jist as soon as we find out about our friend, wees are going up to capter old Molock, and, by my soul, I'd loike to see yees explode in his den."

"You'll have to find old Molock's den afore you capture him."

"Begorra, and we know whar it is."

"Now, boy, you're foolishen with me."

"Pon honor—hope to die if it ar'n't so."

"He speaks the truth, friend trapper," said Dick.

"Je-rusalem! Then that's goin' to make them brisk as the tail of a wounded deer. That find incarnate has lived long enough to entitle him to a front seat in purgatory, and I say pass him down. He has the control of all the Ingangs that comes hereways to hunt and fish; and so he has no trouble in gittin' help to do any meaneness that he takes a notion to; and—Ahi! what war that?" and the trapper started to his feet.

"Bold Heart's signal of danger!" cried Wild Dick. "Boys, we've got to get out of this, and that in a hurry. Bold Heart never gives a false alarm."

In a moment all were upon their feet. They were at once joined by the Indian, whose actions betrayed excitement.

"Many Ingangs 'bout," he said.

"Boys, the cabin of the Mad Trapper is open to friends. If you'll come along with me, two hours' walk will land us there. What say you to that, youngster?"

"Lead the way, ould torpedo, and we'll follow ye," was Billy's reply.

The trapper struck out into the darkness, followed by the Boy Hunters. The youths were almost compelled to run to keep up with their guide, whose long legs sawed the air with wonderful rapidity.

A little over an hour's walk brought them to the old borderman's cabin that stood wrapped in gloom and silence.

The trapper pulled the latch-string, the door swung open and all passed into the room.

"Dark as a wolf's mouth in here, boys," said the trapper, aloud, but at the same instant a shudder passed over his form.

A pungent odor, like that of burning leather, filled the room; and this led the trapper into a startling discovery—the discovery that a fire was burning in the deep fireplace, while every ray of light was excluded from the room by buffalo-robe hung up before the mouth of the fireplace.

The quick, perceptive mind of the trapper at once grasped the meaning of the whole, and, in whisper, said to Billy who was nearest to him:

"Lad, that's a fight—a bloody, gory fight on hand! God only knows how many Ingangs are in this room. That's a fire burning in the chimney, but the devils have hung up a curtain which they'll soon jerk aside and flood the room with light, and then—oh! what a bloody fight! Tell yer companions, and tell 'em to git their shooters ready, and when yer all primed give the word, and I'll let on the light, if the varlets don't do it before," and, having thus warned one of his friends, he continued, aloud, while the youth was conveying the startling facts to his three companions: "But just make yourselves easy, boys, and wait a minnit, and I'll knock up a light in the twinkle of a sheep's tail."

He began fumbling around the shelves in the corner to the right of the fireplace, as if searching for a candle or something to strike a fire.

Suddenly Billy exclaimed:

"Rheady, govein!"

The trapper reached forward and seizing the curtain that the unknown intruders had so cunningly arranged over the fireplace tore it aside.

A flood of light burst through the room,

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Wherein is Discoverable a Secret.

There was no doubt about it, Heloise was in a sadly demoralized condition. The girl had not been in possession of her usual health and strength for some months; she had recently passed through a combination of circumstances calculated to tell upon the nervous system; and, moreover, had been living amid excitement and change that had rendered her restless and irritable. From the last state of affairs Heloise had settled down to a quiet monotony of life and study. But she found with horror that she could not work—had no inclination to it, had not enough control over her mental powers to force them to a performance of their tasks. She was lazy and stupid, she told herself; and her laziness and stupidity took these. She avoided companionship, had variable appetite, was always tired and sleepy yet slept restlessly, her mind laboring unceasingly through a labyrinth of troubled dreams, was cold and pale, and lost flesh rapidly.

Thus matters continued for some days, then there came a severe storm that Heloise tried to endure by devouring a novel. But, even that had little charm, for if she put it aside a moment she became entirely misty concerning what she had read. The next morning brought sunshine. Heloise thought of trying walk, but the only place to which she cared to go was some three miles away, and she never could walk three miles, so she settled herself to study. But every word was meaningless. She found herself shivering over sentences that were only blanks to her mind, vaguely trying to analyze her last strange dreams, or going into little doses. In sheer despair, at last, she arose and leaned her arms upon a table, meeting the reflection of her face in a mirror. Her eyes were dull, her lips bluish, her face ashy-white and expressionless. She looked several years older than her real number of birthdays. And then, a sudden resolution flamed into Heloise's eyes. Loss of looks should accomplish what ought else had failed to do. She threw aside her wrapper, dressed trimly, stepped out into the morning air and sunshine, and choosing the railroad-track for her walk was soon taking swift steps toward the next town.

The air sweet cool but clear against Heloise's face; the sunlight fell yellow and warm, and the rapid exercise soon sent the blood tingling in fast hot currents from the girl's face to her feet. And with this new delicious sensation thrilling her frame, the wind sweeping in welcome freshness against her flushing cheeks, the sunshine enveloping her in a glorious bath, she seemed to forget all things in the sheer joy of existence. Everything along the rathe ordinary path, appeared rarely beautiful to Heloise. The earth was vivid after the rain, and covered with a brilliant network of diamond-sparks. The birds fluttered overhead, then dropped with a trill of song to hide in the dogwood trees among the tufts of orange berries. The odor of wild grapes, wet grasses, autumn woodlands, a field of tomatoes, the moist earth scented the air deliciously. A fringe of fine white flowers skirted the banks of the track, under a bridge a little stream ran gossiping to a company of grave cattle that fed meditatively in the meadow.

A whistle, a coil of smoke, a coming train! Heloise steps to one side until it has thundered past, then she walks on again with the solid plumes of the golden-rod keeping state guard on either hand, and occasionally a

tall, dried mullein stalk overlooking their ranks. Presently her swift coming startles a beautiful striped snake from his sun-bath on the track. He darts forward to escape, finds a little rift under the rail, and frantically disappears among the dewberry vines whose leaves are tanning to such rich tints of brown.

There are great bushes of pompous purple thistles blooming along the banks, and white clusters of wild carrot and pungent yarrow, and meek looking little bunches of the fragrant, everlasting-flowered cudweed, and sumach trees—some with dark polished leaves others with foliage just turning to gorgeous orange and scarlet hues—and an occasional graceful spray of wild asparagus bending lightly under a weight of fiery berries, and a few late pink heads of clover.

Then came woodland, with the red sandy track high up between, and the silent pools at its base reflecting fairy ferns, and the banks hung with dainty purple blossoms and the deep yellow cups of the wild lady-slippers, and the swamp maples hanging out banners of changing leaves amid the green ranks around; and then the outskirts of the town.

A little time to perform an errand and to rest, and Heloise set out on her return around the road. Up through the broad, shady, town street with its pompous new villas, all towers and bay-windows and flower-filled yards, and its handsome old homesteads with wide pine-shade-trees, and unbroken sweep of velvety sward, and fine gardens at the back, out into the country; past the farm-houses and harvest-fields, stacks of scoured cornstalks and piles of yellow pumpkins, locust-groves and toll-gate, splashing stream and tangled thicket, Heloise walked swiftly, with always the low monotone of the distant tumbling ocean in the sunshiny air.

How excellent the dinner tasted to Heloise that day! How fascinating her studies were! What a lovely face the mirror reflected! The next day Heloise thought of some famous green-houses she would like to visit, about two miles away; and the next, that she had never been to the bay, only three miles from home; and so, day after day, she tramped miles along the country roads through the cool autumn weather, and grew strong and beautiful as a child of the wind and sun should.

And Heloise gives great credit to her friend, the mirror.

I'VE ALWAYS NOTICED.

I HAVE always noticed that people are very apt to claim relationship, or acquaintance, with persons who have been, or are, great. I have known persons who possessed the name of Webster, and who could trace a relationship to the gifted statesmen and talented dictionary makers of that name; yet wished to have it strictly borne in mind that there was not the most distant kinship to Professor Webster, the murderer. Had the latter named personage committed no murder, and won for himself a name as a great surgeon, doubtless scores of individuals, having the same cognomen, would have been calling themselves relatives of his.

I think we had better win name and fame on our own individual merits and not endeavor to push ourselves forward on the strength of a name in which we have no right of property.

I know a name goes a great way with some people. Many who have the name of some gifted author, actor, painter or merchant, are silly enough to think the name is going to get them their living, and so sit idly down to wait for the honor or fortune that never comes. This world nowadays is too practical to pay for a name, and it is only the sneaking sort who aim to profit by what some other has done.

If you have the name of one who is good and great, don't disgrace it by being idle and lazy; make it as good and great in the present and future as it has been in the past; and to do that you must be good and great yourself.

I have always noticed that those people who boast a great deal about their Christian charity are very apt to leave it at home when they go to church, else we shouldn't see so many put on such uncomfortable faces and disfigure their countenances with such ungracious looks when a stranger is shown into their pew. I often think, by the way some people show their antipathy to those who intrude in their church seats, that they have engaged a private box in heaven all to themselves, and do not expect that any one will be allowed to dare to contaminate them with their presence in the "land beyond the river." I cannot help growing warm on this subject. It makes me feel mortified that my fellow beings should act so shamefully in the house of God.

I have always noticed that those persons who are inclined to praise the simplicity of a Republican government and speak slightly of an Aristocratic one are the very beings who run after the potentates of other lands, are willing to kneel and kiss the hand of royalty, to treat monarchs better than they do the magnates of their own land, to keep servants in livery, have their armorial crests wherever they can get a chance to place them. Don't think I am blaming them for making themselves somewhat ridiculous; if they like to play the funkey I am not going to prevent them, for, like croquet, it is "each for himself."

It is the inconsistency of the thing I deplore, for what is it but inconsistency? I've known one of the Presidents of our own land to visit a city and not one cheer rent the air, and I have heard of females—I blush for my sex while I have to own it—who bottled up the water the Prince of Wales washed his hands in, when he made his tour through this country. That may sound ridiculous, but it is true, for all that.

I have always noticed that those who talk of the foolishness of mother's advice are the very first ones to seek it when they are in trouble. No one knows how precious mother's love and mother's advice can be, and if it were more often sought and acted upon we should not have so much of crime and misery around about us.

I have always noticed that the very individuals who are always grumbling about the degeneracy of the times are the ones who never strive to make the times better, but do all in their power to clog the wheels of progress, to throw obstacles in the way of any new enterprise which promises to be a success and a benefit to mankind. They are like those persons who throw logs upon a railway track and then wonder—or pretend to wonder—that the train is demolished. Theyumble about the conveniences of the "good old times" and never think of the inconveniences of those lamented days or the conveniences of the present. They never do the world one bit of good or make it any better for living in it. Of what use are they? Their example is bad and yet how many people follow so bad an example. If we were all to sit down and grumble over the degeneracy of the times where would our good and noble workers for the advancement of mankind come from? There's a question for you.

Yours for law,
EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

My Balloon Trip With Donaldson.

I REMEMBER very vividly my trip with the lately extinguished Donaldson into the ethereal heavens.

He had been at me for several days to go up; he said he wanted me to go up with him, whether I came down with him or not. He said I would not lose much time by it, and that time would not loss much by me. All he wanted was *ballast*, and he thought I would answer the purpose better than anything else.

I finally consented, out of respect for him. It was in Cincinnati, and the balloon was full and anxious to start.

When I got into the basket I wanted to get out again because I heard him give the order to cut the rope; I expected they would not cut the rope. I didn't want any ropes out because there was no telling where the balloon would go if it got a start.

I had never climbed a tree without getting dizzy-headed, and if we were two or three miles high it would, I thought, be a little too big a jump for only two men to attempt.

I suggested that we skim along the street, about six feet up, and then we could easily jump out in case of accident.

I said he would do that, but when they cut the rope the balloon went up so fast that I had to hold on to myself for fear of falling out.

The professor regaled me with the scientific effects of falling out of a balloon, at different heights, but he said if a man under such circumstances would only think to slacken his speed when he got within ten feet of the earth, and go down slow, no matter how hard the ground was he wouldn't be hurt.

He said that often when a mile or two above the earth the balloon would go off and leave him up there, and he had experienced great lonesomeness, and had much difficulty in climbing down.

He spoke of the marriage in his balloon a short time before, and said it was a wedding in high life; that it was a hy-meneal affair—that, among the ropes they seemed high-strung, and that it was a falutin thing altogether. He said, also, that they laid claims to belonging somewhat to the upper class. He considered it to be the height of folly for it would be apt to make that couple feel themselves above common people.

When I looked down I began to wish I was a poor laborer in a cellar without any danger of falling up. I would not have been very particular about wages either.

When I asked him how high we were he said if my countenance was any indication we were about three thousand miles, but that his barometer only said a mile and a half.

He told me I needn't be scared for I could get back in twenty seconds if I had a mind to jump.

I asked him what we would do if the balloon would turn upside down.

He said if we were not buoyants enough in that case to carry the balloon upward we would have to spread out our ears for parades and jump out.

I suggested the idea of having another balloon along, smaller than the other, so if one burst we could get into that, and still be saved for the benefit of our wives' relations.

He told me if it was possible it would be better if I wouldn't shake the basket so. I did my best to comply with his wishes, but the atmosphere was chilly.

He threw out more ballast and we kept on going up, and my spirits kept on going down. My feelings were a little too lofty to make me exuberantly comfortable, and I requested him to rein up the machine and let us have a rest, and told him I didn't like to be where there was so much *nothing* around as there was.

I told him I occupied a great deal of space on earth but that I had too much of it here.

He said if I'd keep quiet he would give me a stick of candy, and before long he would let the gas out of the balloon, roll it up, put it under his arm, and we would go down the shortest road we could find.

He said balloons often burst, and in that case a man either had to let it come down alone, or come down with it.

I said it would be nice if they could have a derrick and let it down with ropes, in a disaster of that kind.

He said so too.

I thought there would soon be a time when all the traveling would be done by balloons, and bad roads would cease to be much of an obstacle.

I told him I never knew before how good it was to walk in the mud, even.

I asked him if he thought balloons could ever be made to go against the wind.

He said that the wind was generally a hard thing to run against, worse than rock, but thought if some shield could be put around the balloon to keep the wind from striking it there would be no trouble at all in going any direction.

I said so too.

I wanted to step down and out.

He told me if we went up where the air was rarer we could get out and walk around and exercise our legs, but if I wanted to go down badly he could tie a rope around my neck and let me down as easily as possible; or that I could ride down on the next bag of sand he put out.

When I looked out the earth was clear out of sight, and there was no telling in what direction we were going, as there seemed to be no sign-boards or mile-stones along the route.

It was an awful feeling to feel that you have gone up, at least above the earth. We were beyond the region of kites.

Donaldson seemed perfectly cool and self-possessed.

I was perfectly cold but not self-possessed.

We took a drink, I am sorry to say, but I was glad to take it. It made me so light headed that I was on the point of jumping out and walking down. I forgot everything but the solemn fact that I lived on the earth below. I couldn't forget that. I was above everything but that. I wanted to go home. Home never seemed so dear—the cholera, chicken-pox, measles, due-bills and everything else to that called Barbados tan, and from which one may gather several gallons a day.

The troops sent to guard the western posts halted at the same spring, collected some of the oil, and bathed their joints with it. This gave them great relief from the rheumatism with which they were afflicted. The water, of which the troops drank freely, operated as a gentle glue.

It was the most frightful ascent I ever made.

I sat upon the ragged edge of death all the time. This is a private description. My published account at the time may vary a little from this. This is written after reflection. I don't want to rise above my sphere, nor do I wish to be a balloonist again.

Yours for law,

EVE LAWLESS.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Topics of the Time.

—AMERICANS AS ENGINEERS AND ARMY OFFICERS ARE IN SPECIAL FAVOR IN EUROPE. The recent selection by the Austrian Government of an American engineer's plan for improving the navigation of the river Danube, is a gratifying instance of European concession to American merit. English, French, German, Austrian, Italian and Spanish engineers all competed for the work. The improvement will cost about \$13,000,000, and American contractors will do the whole

THE TOUCH OF HANDS.

BY FRANK M. IMBIE.

One soft September evening
The sun hung low in the blue.
When the darling garden favorites
Drank their morning draught of dew;
When balmy zephyrs dalled
O'er the graves of wayside flowers,
That in dying gave an elixir to—
The summer's wearying hours—

Where the haze of purple deepened
On the hills—where the morn
As the sunrise laid, all softly,
On its glow a crown of gold.
Strewn on rilled lawn and upland
The grasses withered, lay—
In their quaking robes of darkness
Dotted with August's scorching ray.

The sun "Bob-Wall!" in the meadow,
Through cover-gardened fields,
Where the feasts of golden splendor
A royal banquet yields;
The orchards stood like temples
Hung with lampas red and gold,
The twisted, festooned curtains
Up from their glory rolled.

The peacock caught the rainbow
From Aurora's radiant streaks
Then, with willful pleasure pressed them,
To their luscious, downy cheeks.
And I, with sweet enchantment—
Born of this mellow time,
Felt power mesmeric, thrilling
In the hand I held in mine.

Saw the rose color surging
In the cheek where the glow
Of the cimbed cheeks, I happened
Just to touch, by chance—you know!
And it seemed as if the tender,
Holiest thoughts of youth and prime
Crowded into sweet September,
My darling's life and mine!

May the blushing gossiped
To the listless tapers and birds,
Two happy hearts raged over
With a new-born, wakened words;
The yellow sun crept slowly
To his throne of pale gold,
The flower-lips parting gently
Said: "The olden tale oft told?"

Who Wrought the Havoc?

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

It was the worst blow Carroll had ever received; and as he stood there, white to the very lips, with stormy anguish in his eyes, and a perfect tempest of disappointment and anger gathering over his face, Una Lynn wondered, for a second, at the havoc she had wrought. Only for a second—then the look of pitying wonder died from her eyes, and the old scorn resumed its wonted place.

She played her part brightly well; and as she stood there, every motion a grace, every gesture a poem, it was little wonder that Carroll thought what a blind fool he had been to suppose she, the reigning queen of the exclusive set into which Carroll had been received because of his splendid voice that could entertain people so—that Una Lynn, born to the purple, could care for him—a Bohemian, with only a face and a figure and a voice, to pit against the moneybags of Lynn Pert.

But he hadn't stopped to think when he might have stopped. He had worshiped her so madly—from the first, from the very first. He had indulged in such bright, improbable dreams—strangely at variance with his prudent, sagacious nature—but nevertheless sweet, because they savored of improbability.

She had been very gracious to him; and in his delicious infatuation, Carroll did not see she was graciously sweet to everyone; he had only seen the smile she gave him, the glances she bestowed on him, and it was strange, yet not strange, this proud, reserved, passionate heart poured at the girl's feet the obligation of his life—because to such men as Carroll their love is their life.

So it had come to pass; and, as he stood before the woman who had charmed him on to his disengagement, it seemed to him the very sunshine itself was darkness; it seemed to him that in all this world or the world to come, there could be nothing so awful to endure than that clear, intense scorn in Una Lynn's eyes.

It was all the worse, that she had before been so gracious to him. It was the harder to endure, because he never for a moment supposed he would have had it to endure—at her fair, merciless hands.

For a second Carroll stood mute before her, like a man who had unexpectedly come upon a Medusa head. He, looking at her—at her perfect face, with its carved features, its clear, honest, scornful eyes—with a curious agony at his heart, that if he had been capable of translating into words, would have expressed the idea that something had happened him that, at one blow, destroyed all hope, and joy, and faith, all kindness for him forever.

He was not a romantic, or used to winging his way to high flights of sentimental fancy, or soaring emotions; consequently, when reason asserted herself after that momentary deadly stroke from Una's fair lips, the first consciousness was a blighting disappointment, that to Carroll meant more, and was more, than the disappointments of a score of ordinary men who can love, and love, and love again; and the next sensation—and it was aroused by the peculiar flashing of the girl's blue eyes, the light curl on her lips, was the anger, the wrath that she had dragged him on—to this.

He misunderstood her so, and she—she was so perfectly unconscious of causing such a tumult in his brain and heart. If her eyes were scornful, to him, she certainly never meant to express more than a decided refusal, as she had expressed to several men, who, less sensitive, less ardent, less earnest than this lover, who had laid his very soul at her feet, had not discovered scorn or contempt in their honest, frank, fearless eyes.

She was the first to bring an end to the odd silence that had fallen on them, that lasted several minutes.

"You are angry with me, Mr. Carroll. I see it in your face and eyes. You are angry, when you ought to be sorry, because you have put me to a great pain."

Carroll's white face flushed.

"I ought to be sorry!—yes, I ought to be very pitiful for the great pain I have caused you. I am very sorry."

He said it with a half-laugh, that was filled with the bitterness of his soul.

Una looked quietly at him, her blue eyes cool, outspoken, friendly in their straight glance.

"You didn't comprehend me at all, Mr. Carroll; if you did you would know how it hurts me to refuse what you seem to regard such a blessing. I am not so cruel as you seem to think me."

Carroll was too heart-sore to accept her words.

"Cruel!—what is it but cruelty that blasts a man's life at its onset? Do you call it kindness, that turns a man's spirit to wormwood, that shuts him up in a second from any future hope of happiness?"

His voice was so harsh, so discordant—his voice that was generally melody itself. And Una's eyes grew full of silent sympathy as she answered:

"I think it is a kindness, Mr. Carroll, that I tell you I cannot love you as you deserve to be loved: All those other gloomy pictures you have drawn will fade away soon. Is it not a true kindness than if I should—should become your wife—and then, you should learn the sad truth?"

Her voice was gentle, low—so sweet that it almost maddened him.

"But if you were my wife you *should* love me. You would not be able to help it. I would make you love me—my own great love would compel you. Una—Una! do you know what you have done to me?"

He covered his face with his hands—she saw them quiver with pain; and for one brief moment a strangely tender pity stole over her, at sight of this rejected lover's desolation.

"I am sorry," she said, simply, honestly; then started, as Carroll sprung up from his chair.

"So you say—but, before God, I don't believe you! Some day, though—in the future—you may taste the very dregs you have forced to my lips. Not till then will you be sorry—not till then will you comprehend the agony you have caused me."

His pride, his manhood was rising from the wreck of ruined hope—rising unburdened, in the very glory of their strength. And Una thought, as she looked at him what a different man he was from any she ever had seen—how superbly he towered above the ruin she knew he had wrought—and she held out her hand, impulsively.

"I tell you I do not deserve such an opinion from you. I repeat I am deeply sorry—I insist we shall part friends."

Her blue eyes were almost black, now, with intense earnestness—and yet, there was no coquetry in them—no sign or suspicion of relenting. Simply the frank, honest look that had shivered her very soul.

He smiled—it was like a moonbeam flickering over an iceberg—and just touched her wan fingers.

"The compact can do no harm—I think I am past all human hurt, after to-day. Certainly your friend, Miss Lynn."

Una drew her hand suddenly away—his indifferent sarcasm pained her to the quick.

"I am very foolish indeed to care for even so much. Good-afternoon, Mr. Carroll."

He bowed magnificently.

"You are foolish—since we will never see each other again. Good-afternoon, Miss Lynn."

And that was their parting—after all his dreams! that their parting—and as he walked to and fro in his room, ten minutes later, with deathly-white face, clenched hands and bloodshot eyes, Carroll swore to conquer this passion, though it took his life.

And Una—strangely quiet, wearing a strangely-wondering expression on her proud, pure face—went among her guests again, feeling that there had occurred an episode in her life.

"You have positively decided, Una, not to marry Regy Varnley?"

Miss Lynn arranged an aigrette daintily in her braids before she answered.

"There, Aggie, will that do? does the diamond sheaf lie against my hair? No; I never shall marry Mr. Varnley."

"You are an enigma, child. Pray tell me what is the fault with Mr. Varnley?"

Una laughed—there was a faint hint of sadness in the sweet cadence, but Aggie Fenn did not notice it.

"Does the fact of my refusal of Regy Varnley imply a fault in him? Rather—according to the theory of people generally—it infers a grievous fault in me, in not being sensible of the honor he does me."

"And the theory is right, Una. What girl in her senses would refuse a man as desirable in every particular as Mr. Varnley?"

Aggie rocked vehemently to and fro in Una's little pink-satin rocking-chair.

"Perhaps, at twenty-seven, I am getting childish?" Una said, pleasantly. "But there still remains the stubborn fact that I shall not marry Mr. Varnley."

Aggie groaned dolorously.

"Is there man in all this hemisphere that you would marry, pray?"

A faint tinge of wood-rose glowed for a second on Una's cheek; then she answered in grave, unexcited tone:

"Yes, there is one man—and only one man."

Aggie sprung excitedly up.

"Of all things! there actually is a man so favored! Who on earth is he? Una, don't torture me!"

"Am I torturing you? I should think, just at present, only this rose stalk I am snipping and bending so unmercifully was being tortured."

Aggie sunk back in her chair again, breathlessly.

"Una Lynn—will I ever understand you? Tell me, do you who have been keeping yourself for all these years? Is he handsome? Is he rich? have I ever seen him? will I ever see him?"

Una laughed.

"Am I to answer all those questions at once? Suppose you send them in installments?"

Then, of a sudden, her half-roguish, half-infernal air deserted her, and with a little sob she threw herself on the floor beside her friend, and hid her face in her lap, her figure trembling perceptibly from head to foot.

Aggie never said a word, but gently caressed the beautiful hair; and the two women waited in silence, one to hear, the other to speak.

Directly Una raised her head—her face a revelation of profound tenderness.

"I will tell you his name—the name of the man I am going to win for my own—the name I am saying over and over—the name of the man I love with all the heart, mind, strength, soul and body God has given me. It is Carroll."

She read it under her breath, with a sort of reverential awe, that went straight to Aggie's heart.

"Oh, darling! and you will see him to-night, won't you? To-night, for the first time since he has returned from Germany! Una!—dear Una! how happy you must be!"

Happy!"

Una said it to herself, an hour later, as she stood among the guests in Mrs. Conway's parlors, waiting to hear Carroll's name announced—watching, with eyes that were black with excitement, for the first glimpse of his never-forgotten face.

There was a stir among the guests, a murmur of expectation, then his name from the usher, then—she saw him, tall, haughty, splendid, bowing over his hostess' hand.

Ten minutes of dizzy joy, of agonizing anticipation, and then—

"Do you remember Miss Lynn, Mr. Carroll?"

She looked up—into his eyes that smiled in sublime forgetfulness of what had crucified her a thousand times.

"I do not think any one would forget Miss Lynn. I remember we agreed to part as friends—and friends never forget."

His hand closed over hers with a contact that thrilled her from head to foot. She looked into his eyes then—one of her frank, straight glances, yet tempered with an expression he had never seen there before.

"You are right, Mr. Carroll. Friends never forget. And in token—I renew my part of the compact."

She took his arm for a promenade; and in ten minutes the rumor went forth that Carroll and Miss Lynn had resumed their old-time intimacy.

A month later, it was reported that Miss Lynn had succumbed at last—that she was engaged to Carroll; and when Aggie Fenn, in the secret confidence of a lifelong friendship, asked her the truth of the rumor, Una held up her forefinger, where was a plain wide gold band that inside bore the legend:

"UNA-CARROLL."

There were times when Una would look at her ring, and wonder, with a delicious sort of puzzlement, how it had ever happened—after all the years that had stretched so blankly between them; she sometimes fairly held her breath for fear lest something should occur that night, even now—with the wedding-day only a fortnight off—to defraud her of her happiness.

She was forever in a world of perfect bliss. She watched and waited for her lover's coming with an intensity of eager love that she never had dreamed she was capable of. She received his kisses, and returned them with a thanksgiving in her heart; she caressed his hair, his whiskers, and wondered that it was permitted her so to do.

She was wildly, deliciously happy—only praying the days and the hours to speed them on till the day she went to him, forever and forever.

And all this while Carroll was the kingly lover whose dainty, deferential attentions to his betrothed made many a girl's heart throb with envy. All this while he was faultless in his demeanor to the woman he had so easily won; and if the memory of other days ever haunted him there was no sign, beyond a strange smile at times in his eyes, or a hard, terse line around his mouth when no one saw him.

So the days went on; the preparations were completed, and then the day itself came, when Una was to cross the narrow threshold that divided her from her one, only happiness.

She had parted from her lover that same morning; he had driven around with a tiny bouquet, about ten o'clock, and given it to her, with a kiss.

"Carry it to the altar, Una, where I am to meet you. Don't take it from the box until you reach the church-door, or the cold air will snap the petals of the roses. I have written a little love-message on the narrow silk that ties it—promise me you won't look at it until you stand at the altar. Good-by, darling—until one o'clock. This is our last good-by, isn't it?"

He kissed her, again and again, then went away, leaving the bouquet in its box, with its message within.

It was delightful to Una—this romantic idea of her lover; and she composed a hundred little notes while she was being dressed, such as she was so sure this message was.

Then in her elegant bridal array she was driven to the church, where her friends were waiting her, with her precious bouquet in her hands, waiting to be opened.

She went up the aisle on her father's arm, her bridal party following, and took her place at the altar.

The fragrance of the white roses and the double white violets arose like an offering; and she smoothed out the silken ribbon, and read the message:

"I told you in a future day you should drink of the wine of life put to my lips. I told you you should comprehend my sufferings—have my words come true? To know I renounce you at the foot of the altar—to know I have played the drama out, because you once had no mercy on me—to know it was you who would have none on me to-day, spending still further, never to see your fair face again, are you satisfied, in knowing all this—that you appreciate, at length, some of the agony you caused me, that I swot to avenge?"

She read it, straight through, and no one saw her dying face under the veil; no one observed the writing on the ribbon; no one saw her tear it off and stuff it firmly in her mouth, behind the teeth that clenched in convulsive agony, as the last sentiment of her brain was to hide from the world both her shame and her shamer!

Then they saw her sway, and fall; then amid all the noise, the confusion, the bustle, there came a voice that brought a pang to every heart—save the poor broken one, covered with costly satin and priceless lace:

"She has not been strong enough to endure the excitement. She is dead of heart-disease."

Ah, truly of heart-disease! They buried her in her bridal robes, with her flowers in her hand; and over her coffin people said, softly, that she must have had a presentiment that her lover was a rogue, and that was what killed her.

And over her grave friends pause, pitying, and ask each other if anything has ever been heard of handsome, wicked Carroll, who never came to meet his bride at the holy altar.

Aggie never said a word, but gently caressed the beautiful hair; and the two women waited in silence, one to hear, the other to speak.

Directly Una raised her head—her face a revelation of profound tenderness.

"I will tell you his name—the name of the man I am going to win for my own—the name I am saying over and over—the name of the man I love with all the heart, mind, strength, soul and body God has given me. It is Carroll."

She said it under her breath, with a sort of reverential awe, that went straight to Aggie's heart.

pidly, and caused me to think over what was best to be done.

I knew I had to "fight it out on that line if it took all the summer," no matter what the odds might be against me, and a good "buffalo wallow" would be the place to fortify myself in; yet I kept urging on my mule to get near the fort as possible, so that, when it came to the worst, my firing would be heard, and bring my comrades to my relief.

The Indians were now getting pretty close, and would now and then send a bullet after me to remind me that they were coming to the ball, but mule was long-winded, and held out bravely, although he had long-winded Indian horses upon his track.

At last I came to the ridge dividing Pawnee Fork and Ash Creek, and from this point could just see the fort, still five miles away.

The sun was nearly down, and in a few moments more I knew I should see the flag lowered and hear the evening gun; but yet, "zip," "zip" would fall a bullet near me, until I concluded to return the compliment, although the distance was too great for crack shooting.

Knowing that their only hope was to catch me before succor came from the fort, and that they dare not follow me across Pawnee Fork, two miles from the post, they urged their horses to their utmost speed, and soon crept up to within two hundred yards of me, and I made up my mind to fight from under the bridge that crossed Pawnee Fork creek, when all of a sudden from around a bend of the creek came a mule-team filled with soldiers, who, discovering the Indians after me, opened fire, and at once my race for life stopped, for my pursuers wheeled off into a hollow and were soon lost to sight.

I found that the welcome "soldier boys" had been down to the lower crossing of Pawnee Fork after the bodies of three men, who had been killed that morning by Satanta and his band.

On arriving at the fort I reported to the commanding officer, and learned that the Indians had attacked a ranch on the old Santa Fe crossing of Pawnee Fork, and had killed three men, and driven off the stock, after which they came in sight of the fort and brandished their arms in a threatening way, until discovering that the boys were ready for a brush, they rode away.

The Indians had evidently planned this work out, for the night before Satanta had been to the fort and traded off his carriage, thinking, probably, it would not be exactly the thing in which to go on the war-trail.

At that time we had no telegraph lines, and yet it was important to get word to General Sheridan, whose headquarters were then at Fort Hays, distant sixty miles from Larned, and when I arrived old Dick Curtis was preparing to start on the perilous duty of carrying dispatches, through a country swarming with hostile Indians.

The night was coming on dark, and there being no road to Fort Hays, some one had to go who knew the country, and Dick was that man, but he was getting too old for a sixty mile ride alone on a rainy night, and Denver Jim, a good scout and a brave man, volunteered to go, but was not certain that he knew the country well enough, and thus matters stood when I arrived. It did not take me long to see that the commanding officer had his eye on me for the job, for he asked if I thought a man well mounted could ride it in a night?

I told him yes, and volunteered for the work if Denver Jim would go with me.

He said he would not ask it of me after my sixty mile trip, and my hard ride for life, but I told him that I would be ready in an hour, and off I started to work the sutler store, and then hunt up something to eat.

Mounted upon good mules we started upon our trip, leaving the fort at ten o'clock, and without particular adventure we reached General Sheridan's headquarters at seven o'clock the morning following.

Delivering the dispatches to Colonel Moore, of the general's staff, and telling him where we could be found, we went over to my old home, Hays City, situated about a mile from the fort.

Leaving our tired mules at Anderson's livery stable, to be well taken care of, we crossed the street to the Gridiron, where we met my old friend, Hank Fields, who invited us to "look into a damp glass," which, after our long ride, we of course did, and soon found ourselves a pair of lions, for our trip had become noised abroad.

After a good breakfast at the "J. D. Perry House," we lay down for a sleep, and at one o'clock an orderly came over to the hotel and said:

"General Sheridan wishes to see the scout, Cody."

I at once sought the general's quarters, and told him all I knew about the Indian rising, and then he asked me all about the Beaver Creek and Republican River country, and said that there was one of the finest cavalry regiments in the army on its way from the States, and he intended to order it into that country after the Dog Soldier Sioux, who had been committing a great many depredations of late, and he also said he wanted a guide for the command and that I had been recommended as the man to fill that position.

I thanked the general for the honor done me, and he went on to say that some one had to go with dispatches to Fort Larned that night. I of course volunteered for the work, and it was settled that, at dark, in company with Denver Jim, I should start.

Without accident we arrived at *reveille* the next morning, and found all excitement, for the Indians had been attacking trains on the Santa Fe trail, and had killed a number of haymakers in sight of the fort.

Having to return again to Fort Hays as soon as it was dark, and this time alone, Captain Nolan kindly loaned me a splendid horse, for a mule is always braying when alone; and as soon as it was dark, mounted and started upon my sixty mile ride.

Nothing of importance happened until nearing Walnut Creek, my horse suddenly attempted to whinny, and I knew danger was around.

Keeping steadily on I suddenly found myself in a band of Indian ponies, and at once I began backing out, when I heard the guard cry out. I made no reply and was hurrying away, when he gave a fearful war-whoop, which was answered in twenty different directions.

But no sooner did I clear one herd of horses than I would run into another, and this proved that there were a large number of Indians encamped upon the creek.

As a better proof that I was in a tight place I suddenly ran right upon three dismounted Indians, who threw themselves flat on the ground and commenced firing at me, which maneuver caused me to feel that I had business calling me elsewhere about that time.

Wheeling to the right-about I darted off and soon heard mounted warriors in hot pursuit,

and I knew that my only safety lay in the speed and bottom of my horse, who soon proved, to my satisfaction, that he was leaving my enemies far behind.

Just as I was beginning to feel secure my horse at once sprang to his feet, unhooked, and started to run, leaving me dismounted on the prairie with a band of Indians close upon me; but I had "been there before," and was prepared for just such a fall as I had, as I invariably tie one end of my lariat to the bridle-bit and the other to my belt, sticking the coil also in my belt. When my horse got to the end of the rope he found he had just one hundred and ninety pounds to drag with his mouth, and so gave up the job and found his passenger on his back again in short order, instead of having some Indian squaw making a waterfall of my scalp.

Just as I was once more in the saddle "zip," "zip" the bullets fell around me, encouraging me immensely in getting away from them at lively pace.

As soon as I again got out of sight of the Indians, over a ridge in the prairie, I immediately turned short off to the left in the direction of Fort Larned, which course I kept until I felt the Indians had wholly lost me in the darkness, when I again turned to the right, taking a westerly course parallel with the creek, which direction I followed for several miles, when I once more pursued my way northward and struck the creek bottom for the way of running into another nest of the red hornets.

Then there came the difficulty of finding a crossing, for though the water was not deep, the banks were steep and high; but fortunately I struck a buffalo trail, just what I was in search of, and quietly crossing the stream struck out across the bottom in the direction of the hills, feeling quite relieved at my escape, and I allowed my horse to rest for the long ride yet before him.

At this moment it occurred to me that I had a "life preserver" in my pocket that contained some of "Tappan's best," but of course I didn't work any of it—kept it for fear of a snake bite, just as any plainman would have done, or you either, my masculine reader.

Just before daybreak I reached the Smoky Hill River, and I suddenly heard a stamping and running that nearly scared me to death; but before I died of fright I discovered the cause of the row was a passing herd of buffalo, so I was happy once more.

Letting my horse rest and giving him a drink of water from the stream, I crossed the Smoky Hill and once more set out for Fort Hays, arriving at my destination just as the morning gun summoned the "boys in blue" to roll-call.

This made three nights in succession I had passed in the saddle, and you can wager, without fear of losing, that I was a tired man, and that my horse was also fagged out, and when daylight came I hardly recognized him after his night's trip, for no one but a quartermaster geologist would have called him a horse.

I turned him over to a quartermaster, to be sent back to his owner; but, whether he ever

got back to his kind master, or was "covered with an affidavit," I have never been able to learn, as I was, a few days after, sent into the Beaver Creek and Republican River country as guide and scout for the gallant Fifth Cavalry, as fine a regiment of officers and men as any army can boast of.

I told him yes, and volunteered for the work if Denver Jim would go with me.

He said he would not ask it of me after my sixty mile trip, and my hard ride for life, but I told him that I would be ready in an hour, and off I started to work the sutler store, and then hunt up something to eat.

At that time we had no telegraph lines, and yet it was important to get word to General Sheridan, whose headquarters were then at Fort Hays, distant sixty miles from Larned, and when I arrived old Dick Curtis was preparing to start on the perilous duty of carrying dispatches, through a country swarming with hostile Indians.

The night was coming on dark, and there being no road to Fort Hays, some one had to go who knew the country, and Dick was that man, but he was getting too old for a sixty mile ride alone on a rainy night, and Denver Jim, a good scout and a brave man, volunteered to go, but was not certain that he knew the country well enough, and thus matters stood when I arrived. It did not take me long to see that the commanding officer had his eye on me for the job, for he asked if I thought a man well mounted could ride it in a night?

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The night was coming

my name—and I am proud of it! I love my husband! If the laws offered me release by any crime of his, I would not take it! I would cling to him! Oh, what have I done to be thus shamed and humbled?"

"I beseech you, forgive me," pleaded the offender.

"Leave me, Mr. Wyatt! You have given me a great shock! You have shown me the danger of trusting one I esteemed a friend! You can do me no other service or favor than to leave me!"

"Only say you pardon me!"

"Your very presence here is a peril and a reproach to me! Why will you not go? Will you force me to call the servants?"

Wyatt had moved toward the door; he turned quickly and rushed to her.

"I am gone!" he said, "and will not again offend your sight. Only say you forgive me; give me your hand in token of pardon. If you only know how miserable I am!"

Ruhama's hand was outstretched; it may have been to enforce his departure. But he snatched it, and pressed it passionately to his lips.

"Now, farewell!" he gasped, in a voice hoarse with feelings that almost suffocated him.

Ruhama snatched her hand away and stepped back. As she did so, she noticed that the door of the library neared the front, which had been ajar, was pushed gently open, while a rush of cold air came in, evidently from the outside door of the mansion, opened likewise.

Tom Wyatt saw her eyes fixed, and instinctively turned. A figure stood in the doorway; but before he could recognize it, or speak, it had vanished. In a second the house door was closed with some violence, as if some one had gone out.

Ruhama stood transfixed with horror.

"It was Arthur!" she cried. "Quick, go after him; bring him back!"

Wyatt obeyed her. He was outside the front door in an instant; but he could see no one. The street was solitary. He ran to the corner, to the one on the other side, but not a human being could be seen. Then he went again into the house to report his want of success.

Ruhama had staggered to the bell and rung it, for she felt herself growing deathly faint. The housekeeper, who was up, ran in, and found her mistress on the floor, but not quite insensible. As Mr. Wyatt entered she bade him fetch some cold water from the dining-room. He brought it, and then, with a muttered, imperfect explanation that Mrs. Marsh had been alarmed by the entrance of some stranger, who had retreated, he turned away and left the house.

Olive, who had not yet taken off her dress, and had her door open, heard the commotion, and came rapidly down-stairs. She thought the General had returned. The housekeeper told her Mrs. Marsh had had a fright, and was near fainting, but was better now, and would be able in a few minutes to go to her own room.

"You had better leave her to me," said Olive, going up to her friend, and clasping her arms round her. "I will take her to her room. You may put out the lights."

She led Ruhama tenderly up the stairs and into her own sumptuous apartments. She placed her upon the couch, and supported her in her arms. She would not ask a question till she had regained composure.

Ruhama sat up and looked around her.

"Did you know?" she whispered, "that my husband has been here? He has been—and he is gone. This time it is forever!"

"Oh, no!"

"An evil fate has pursued me! A fate I have not deserved. Mr. Wyatt followed us in, and after you left me, he came out from where he was hid."

"Hid!"

"He spoke wild and wicked words! He insulted me, Olive! I bade him go, but he would have my hand in token of my forgiveness. Just then, my husband—he must have entered with a night-key—stood in the doorway! He rushed out again—out into the street! He heard—he saw only enough to make him believe me unfaithful and treacherous! Olive, I shall never see him again!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE DEBUTANTE DISENCHANTED.

The scene was a country house near one of the salt marshes of New Jersey, not far from the seacoast.

It was the close of a day in spring. The rosy sunset touched the tips of a few scattered trees, and the reeds that covered acres of the soil, and the gable end of a rude, weather-beaten wooden dwelling.

The interior of the house was less inviting. A room covered with a rag carpet and furnished with settees and chairs—a few of them cushioned with pillows of red marine cloth, admitted the purple light through unshuttered windows. There was a fire of sticks in the wide chimney, and a door stood open, revealing an interior chamber, that served as a bedroom. By one of the windows stood a large easy-chair of red stuff, luxuriously cushioned; and in it reclined the wasted form of a young girl.

An elderly lady was crossing the room bearing a tray, which she was about to deposit on a stand close to the invalid's chair.

"You must eat," she said, coaxingly; "you must gain strength as rapidly as possible."

"Yes, I will eat," the young girl answered. "My appetite has come back since you promised to take me to the city. When shall we leave this place?"

She did full justice, while speaking, to the delicate viands before her.

"When? Oh, very soon, I hope," was the response of the elder.

"To-morrow?"

"Hardly so soon; you are not strong, remember, Helene; you might have a relapse, and that would be worse here than in Richmond, because there are no skillful physicians."

"I don't want them; I have been gaining strength without them. I only want to go to the city, and be at home again."

"You are impatient to leave me, Helene."

"I am very grateful to you, madame, for all your kindness," answered the girl. "But you know I have no voice since my illness, and we could not sing any more, even if we had engagements."

"Your voice will return when you are quite strong again."

"Maybe; I do not know. But I do not want to sing any more in concerts, or in such troupes as visit the provincial cities."

"You have had as much success, Helene, as a young vocalist could expect. You cannot equal the leading prima donnas of the world with a few months of training."

"I know that; I have learned to be aware of my defects, if I have learned nothing else. I have had mediocre success, as you say; and I am not satisfied. I would rather go back and submit myself to rules."

"You should not be discouraged by one trial, or by many. Such a position as you have aimed at cannot be attained without labor."

"True, and my efforts for the last months have done me harm rather than good. I am sensible of that."

"Leave me, Mr. Wyatt! You have given me a great shock! You have shown me the danger of trusting one I esteemed a friend! You can do me no other service or favor than to leave me!"

"Only say you pardon me!"

"Your very presence here is a peril and a reproach to me! Why will you not go? Will you force me to call the servants?"

Wyatt had moved toward the door; he turned quickly and rushed to her.

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"I mean to do so," muttered Leona, "and that before I leave this house."

Her words were not audible to the girl, who was lying back in her chair, drowsily closing her eyes.

"You had better go to bed now," the dame suggested.

"Call me Elodie; that is my name."

"Mademoiselle Elodie!"

"And you need not prefix a 'Mademoiselle,'—I have dropped the French and Italian. I am content with plain Elodie Sterne, a willful schoolgirl, who has had her holiday and her heyday, and is willing now to complete her education in the most proper way."

She shook back her still luxuriant glossy curly hair as she pushed the stand and tray from her, having made a hearty supper.

The madame rung the little bell on the table, and the things were removed by the uncoth attendant who was the only servant on the premises.

"The day after to-morrow we start, do we understand you to say so?"

"I did not say. Only that you were not strong enough to go to-morrow, and the monsieur, your uncle, has not yet returned."

"What difference will that make?" cried Elodie, drawing herself up in the chair, her eyes flashing. "He has no right to control me!"

"Not to control, of course; but—"

"Why should we wait for his return? We are not far from the city! Ten—twenty miles—how far?"

"Somewhere about that."

"And the railroad, I know, passes within a couple of miles. We were set down at a station, and came that distance in a carriage."

"Ah, you remember that, dear?"

"I remember it well, though I was so weak from the fever. And I heard you ask the distance from the city. I know these are the salt marshes, for I have been over them; and I know that some large New Jersey towns lie back—that way," pointing in one direction; "while the sea is yonder. We were not to stop here long; there are no accommodations for us."

"True, my dear; and no piano—nor music."

"We had no need of them, when I could not sit up," remarked the young girl, forgetting that Madame Leona was an artist, too, and would find the time hang heavily without opportunity of practicing. "Now I am well again. We will have the packing finished tomorrow, and set out early the next day."

"Where will you stop in the city?" inquired the lady, after a pause.

"I will go first to auntie Brill's, and then send word to my guardian."

"Do you think he will receive you?"

"Why not? He promised aunt Letty to take care of me, and said I should look to him until I was of age."

"But you cast off his authority, child."

"That was when I thought I must earn my living, and not be a burden to him," replied the girl, a flush mounting to her face.

"He thought me too young for that; and he wanted me back again, or he would not have sought me so diligently. Would he, think you, madame?"

"I do not know," mused the lady.

"Madame Leona?" the girl suddenly exclaimed, sitting up straight—"did not a letter come from auntie Brill while we were in Rich mond?"

"I do not know of any."

"But I am sure one must have come. I had written to her, and told her to write until I was of age."

"I am not too weak! See, I can walk!"

She made several steps forward, waving back the assistance her companion offered. Then she went back to her chair.

"I know Mr. Rashleigh intercepted that letter."

"Child, you wrong your uncle."

"Don't call him my uncle! He was only my aunt Letty's husband, who always treated her ill. I have never called him uncle; I was a boarder in his house; he had the money all the time."

"Nonsense, child! How you do startle one! Sit down; you are too weak to stand."

"I am not too weak! See, I can walk!"

She made several steps forward, waving back the assistance her companion offered. Then she went back to her chair.

"I know Mr. Rashleigh intercepted that letter."

"For what?"

"No; no letters at all had been received."

"But I know there was one from auntie Brill. I know she has written! Madame, I will tell you what became of that letter: Mr. Rashleigh has kept it!"

The young lady had risen to her feet, and held herself steady by the arms of the chair.

"Nonsense, child! How you do startle one! Sit down; you are too weak to stand."

"I am not too weak! See, I can walk!"

She made several steps forward, waving back the assistance her companion offered. Then she went back to her chair.

"I know Mr. Rashleigh intercepted that letter."

"For what?"

"I do not know of any."

"Enough to take us to the city?"

"About enough. But, Elodie, something is still due to me. I have lost much time—waiting on you, these many weeks; and if you are not going to sing in public, it is but fair that my losses should be made good."

"I will take care of that," said the girl.

"Every cent shall be paid to you."

"How are you to pay my claims, if you have no money?"

"I will ask my guardian to advance it out of the installments due to me. Or, if I cannot draw on my property, he will lend it to me."

"It will be better not," he replied.

"I shall be to complete my arrangements for having my son brought from the hospital. We shall all come together Friday evening. Keep her quiet; she must know nothing. I will have no quarreling about the matter."

"It is best so."

"We shall put her in a happy state with the medicine in her tea, and have the

WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

BY JOY JOY, JR.

Am I a woman's rights man? Yes,
I rather think I somehow guess
I'm heart and soul for what you call
Dear women's rights. God bless them all!

If you can find an advocate
In this or other land, Stand by me!
We'll work and earn 'em in the cause,
I'll sit me down and shout applause.

I think that they should have the right
To have their spirits over light;
The right to be exceeding sweet;
The right to be both fair and neat.

I think that they have the right to warn,
The right to never chide and scorn;
The right to be forever dear;
The right to never shed a tear.

They should have all the rights to be
Tender in love and constancy;
The right to be forever young,
And hold (however loose) their tongue.

I think that they should have the right
To love their friends with all their might;
The right to keep from b'ring jealous
Ourselfs for fear of other follows.

I think they have the right to be
Truthful in their honestness
To their estimate and blesse;
The right to share our joys and woes,
To mend our morals and our clothes.

I think they have the right to be
The angels that we love to see;
The right to mean just what they say
When it is in a kindly way.

I think they have the right to do
What is most blessed and most true,
For women's rights? Don't ask me that.
But for that cause just chalk my hat.

LEAVES

From an Actor's Life;
or
Recollections of Plays and Players.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

XV.—*The Battle of Buena Vista—The Cast of Characters—The Rancheros and the American Army—Too Little Soldier and too Much Uniform—The First Accident—Undeveloped Bumps—Ocky Johnson—His Peculiarities—The Joke that was Played upon Him—The Boston Museum.*

THERE are not many characters in the "Battle of Buena Vista," but they are all good; this is a feature that I would recommend to aspiring young play-writers. The principal character is a Yankee by the name of Hezekiah Hartshorn, which was personated by George Wyatt; he was as free-and-easy as all stage Yankees are made, and performed surprising feats of daring against incredible odds. He was accompanied by a friend and comrade, an Irishman, by way of a foil, called Barney O'Something or other, who carried a small black bottle, and a large stick—the typical shillalah. He also was one of the "bravest of the brave." Who ever saw a stage Irishman that was not? One flourish of his shillalah was enough to put a troop of Mexican lancers to flight. This fight-and-whisky-loving son of the soil was represented by George Fox. He did not dream then that he was destined to rank among the first comedians of America. Then there was a heroic young officer, Captain Lincoln, personated by G. C. Howard, who protects a distressed Texan maiden with the romantic name of Zamora (acted by Mrs. Howard), and Sally Doolittle (Mrs. Stone), Hezekiah's sweetheart, who follows her lover in male attire, and gets into difficulties, by getting into a pair of trowsers. Then there was bluff General Taylor, "Old Rough-and-Ready," done by Mr. Benson, in a rather exaggerated general's uniform; and a ferocious Mexican, Carales, fitly represented by O. Johnson. Some idea of the character of this latter individual may be formed from his first words when he rushes on the stage to the accompaniment of sheet-iron thunder and rosin-lightning, and loudly exclaims:

"Thunder, storm, and lightning are to me most welcome!"

Bill Sticker and some others appeared as blood-thirsty Rancheros, and Charley Fox and myself played the American Army; and as the regimental coats furnished us for that purpose were made for men, there was a great deal more uniform than army; and my hat was so large that I had to stuff something in the top to keep it from the bridge of my nose, and then it made me feel top heavy.

Our duty consisted of following General Taylor wherever he went until the last scene, when we participated in the "Battle," and then we made ourselves hoarse yelling "Victory!"

Here I began that peculiarity of falling into any trap-door that was left conveniently open for me to experiment on, and that I have not broken my neck must be because I am reserved for some other fate, as they say that "a man who is born to be hanged will never be drowned."

An itinerant phrenologist felt of my bumps when I was acting with Wm. B. English, in Bangor, Me., and sold me a chart. He told me, after a most flattering description of what my bumps prognosticated, that I had two growing protuberances that puzzled him, as they were not sufficiently developed for him to pronounce upon, but that they "would come to something in time."

I thought at that time that they might be horns; but, I am sorry to say, they are still undeveloped. It may be, however, that this much delayed development is the safeguard that has preserved me from the perils of stage traps, set rocks, and bridges in the theater, and shipwreck, and the horse cars, out of it.

A flight of stairs at the back of the stage led to the dressing-rooms below. To give the proper pitch to the stairs necessitated quite a large opening, two feet wide by six feet long.

When the play was in action they had a custom of laying a set piece over this opening, as I discovered just as the "Battle" began, and the army was ordered to "charge." Charley Fox was on the other side of the stage and I rushed across the back of it to join him, stepped on the set piece—cotton cloth stretched on a wooden frame and painted to represent a rock, or a door, or a window—and went through with a surprising velocity, leaving my soldier hat to mark the spot where I had disappeared.

Fortunately I alighted upon my feet about half way down the stairs and clutched the railing. I was only a little jarred but considerably astonished.

Charley Fox came rushing to my assistance, removed the set-piece, and fished me up, and was agreeably surprised to find that I was not injured, and the next moment we charged on the stage and discomfited Bill Sticker and the rest of the Rancheros with our accustomed vigor.

Octavian Johnson—Ocky, everybody called him—belonged to a class of actors peculiar to the drama in all ages; his ambition was greater than his merits. A better fellow never

lived. He was quiet and unassuming in private life, but nature had not given him those requisites so essential to the profession he had chosen. He had an ungainly figure, an unpleasantly marked face, and a bad voice. For the ruffians of the drama he did passably well—"Front Wood Robbers" they used to call them—but anything beyond that was beyond him.

He was the butt of the company and he was made the victim of a joke which he took seriously to heart. Sothern is very fond of his jokes, but George Wyatt was an inveterate practical joker. Indeed, actors are celebrated for the love of these pleasantries practiced upon their associates, and they are not particular in the selection of their victims.

Ocky's visage was an ill favored one, and his eyes bulged from his head something after the style of a bullfrog, but he fancied himself an attractive object to a woman's eye. He used to parade the streets, dressed in light trowsers, buff vest, a blue silk velvet cutaway coat, with bright buttons, and a white hat—in this costume to ogle the girls.

He considered this costume stunning, but I thought it decidedly *outre*. It attracted attention, however, and so his object was gained. A man's weakness is easily discovered. Ocky received a love-letter, written in gushing terms. This was too good a thing to be kept a secret, and he read it aloud for our delectation in the dressing-room. He was requested to answer it, and he did so. The correspondence became regular. He was requested to send a lock of his hair to his "fair unknown," and he complied, receiving a raven lock—a small one—in return. He was in raptures. Nothing now would content him but an interview with his incognito. He requested it in glowing words, and he was notified to be on the corner of Westminster and North Main street (the theater was on North Main street at a certain hour, wearing a pink ribbon in the button-hole of his coat).

He was punctual to the tryst. The fair unknown did not come, to his great chagrin, and to his great surprise every male member of the company passed him at the corner with the interrogatory of: "Holloa, Ocky, what are you doing here?" and after worrying him for five minutes left him.

Ocky at last lost patience and gave up the hope of meeting his correspondent that day; he returned to Earl's Hotel, where he was boarding.

That night Wyatt invited us all to an oyster supper, and after the bivalves were disposed of he began to rally Johnson upon his "love affair," and told him he also had received a lock of hair, and produced a lock of raven hair that made Johnson's eyes bulge still further from his head, for it was precisely similar to the one he had received.

"And I've got a lock of hair, too!" cried Charley Fox, from whose head the raven locks had come.

He had splendid hair. He produced a sandy lock tied with a blue ribbon.

"Why, that's mine!" gasped Ocky; then he was sorry that he had admitted it, for a conviction of the trick played upon him at once flashed through his mind.

"Yes, and here are your letters," said Wyatt. "Just listen, boys; here's paths for you."

He began to read the letters, to Ocky's intense mortification, and "set the table in a roar."

Ocky attempted to save himself by saying: "I knew it was you, all the time." But, in the classical language of the present day, that was "too thin."

From Providence I went to a new theater in Boston called the "Lyceum," under the management of Humphrey Bland, for a short time; did some "strolling" in New Bedford, and then secured an engagement for "General Utility" at the Boston Museum, at that time the most popular place of amusement in the city.

This was my first engagement in a first-class theater, and my career as an actor had now fairly commenced.

In a little while that which it fed upon would be exhausted, and then—I

My God! my God!—But I am mad when I say my God. I have no God! I have set myself against him, and dared to defy him by my impious deed. I have gone further than any man can go and be forgiven. I have brought a swift and terrible punishment upon myself. What could be more terrible than to sit and watch this *thing*! This horrible, horrible thing! I had hoped to bring back the soul that was Alice. But that is somewhere far away, and I know that I have forever separated my soul from hers. She is mine no longer. I have lost her eternally, and this *shape* mocks me with my loss. I am going mad, I think. If I could shut out the sight of it—but I cannot! If I turn away some mysterious power draws me back, and the soulless eyes stare up at me until I feel as if the world was whirling off into space and there was nothing in it save myself and this hideous thing.

I have written my story down. I dare not die with it unconfessed. It may warn some other rash mortal to beware and not meddle with the doings of God. Oh, Alice! Alice!

my lost darling, where are you? I have sinned, and the loss of you is my punishment!

In the last two days I have lived ten thousand years. My hair is white. I am an old man. I am dying. In a little while this

shape which once held your soul will have

drained the last drop of life from me, and then—I

I dare not think of it. I can only

think of you and the sin by which I have lost you forever. Oh, Alice! pray for me, pity me!

—

We read the MSS. through with strange emotions. It was old and yellow with time, and the dust of years had gathered on it. It had been written with a feeble hand, and a great blot marked the place where the pen had fallen from his fingers. Perhaps the blot of death had fallen upon his life then. Who can say? We looked at the two moulder skeletons with faces that were full of awe, and I know that both of us were thinking about the strange, weird story we had read. Had the man who had written it done what he claimed he had? or was it but the wild and fanciful story of a maniac brain?

We turned away and left the room silently and thoughtfully, and breathed freer when we shut the door of the old house behind us. It had kept its secret for many years, but we had found it out at last.

I knelt down by her side, and took both her hands in mine, and fixed my eyes steadily, earnestly on her face. And then I brought the power of my will to bear upon the one thought which the world held for me at that awful moment. I had loved her. She was mine, and mine only, and my will must force the life which had fled from her, to come back from the uttermost parts of the earth, from the bounds of space—from the other world, perhaps—and stir again into action the stagnant blood, and set the clogged wheels in motion.

"Life of her I love!" I cried, "whatever

you are, come back! I command you!" and my will seemed to be strong enough to move the world. It went leaping through space like keen lightning. It was as resistless as the tempest. It was the one power in the world, in that awful, intense moment.

"Come back!" I cried. "I command you to come back!" and in that brief time it seemed as if I lived thousand ages. Suddenly the white lids of her eyes stirred, and then—they lifted, and my darling looked up at me, and I felt the warm breath cross her lips, and—"I have conquered death!" I cried. "I have done the work of a God!" and fell prone upon the floor, and for hours after that I knew nothing.

When I came back to consciousness it was daylight. I got up and went to the couch on which I had laid my Alice, and looked down at her with strange, exultant rapture. I had expected that she would greet me with a smile; but the face was no more like the face of the Alice I had loved than the shadow of a thing is like the substance it is a shadow of. True, the features were the same, but that was all. There was no expression of any emotion; nothing but the shape of that which had been lit up with the light of a mind that had made it beautiful.

"Alice!" I cried, and kissed her. But the features never moved. The dull eyes did not light up with a single gleam of recognition.

A terror came upon me. I clutched at the table to keep from falling. In one swift second I realized all.

I had willed to bring back to her the life she had lost. I had done that. But I had brought back life only. The soul I had no power over, and that was *where*? Here before me lay the *shape* of the woman I had loved. But the soul—that which was the Alice I had known, was gone.

Can you imagine the awful horror that made me sink down upon the floor and hide my face in my hands, and moan and shiver like a being who sees the world slipping away from beneath his feet, and is powerless to help himself? No! No! I cannot make you feel the faintest degree the terrible sense of my sin, which had been so terribly punished.

I lay there for hours. I dared not look at the *shape* which breathed, but moved—not—at the *thing* which held it in life I had summoned back, but from which the soul had gone forever. But by and by a horrible fascination came over me, and I got up and stood beside it, and I was powerless to move away. It held me spell-bound by its silent, awful power. More than once I tried to break away from it, and I strove to leave the room; but that strange, terrible fascination drew me back.

At length the intensity of my feelings exhausted me and I fell to the floor in a long swoon. When I awoke from it I was weak as a child. The first thought that came into my mind was of the *shape*, and as before I was forced by the same terrible power to drag myself to it and look upon my work. And as I sat there hour after hour powerless to stir, or even turn my eyes away from the horrible thing, I realized that it was like the vampire which sucks away our life-blood. I had called back the mysterious principle we call life. And this life which I had dared to meddle with, in my sinful recklessness, fed itself and existed upon my own vitality. It was draining the vital force from my veins with terrible swiftness.

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